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HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

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1986

MOVING AHEAD

MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT
ONTARIO

PREPARED BY:
MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT
HUMAN RESOURCES TASK FORCE

AUGUST 19, 1986

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John Scarcella
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REPORT OF THE
MOE HUMAN RESOURCES TASK FORCE

Executive Summary

This report represents the findings and recommendations of the Human Resources Task Force, which was established by the Deputy Minister, R.M. McLeod, on April 17, 1986. The Task Force was directed to develop broad recommendations for improving the Ministry's human resources management programs.

The stimulus for this project was provided by the Deputy Minister, and was reinforced by the release of the Moher Report commissioned by the Management Board of Cabinet and released in March, 1986. The Moher Report analyzed a number of current issues in human resources management across the Ontario Public Service and made recommendations for changes in the structure and responsibilities of the Civil Service Commission and in the overall management of human resources in the Public Service. Its focus was, however, on the senior executive levels. The Ministry's Human Resources Task Force has taken the goals outlined in the Moher Report, looked at their application within the Ministry of the Environment, and made recommendations to improve the management of human resources within the Ministry.

The Task Force's approach to identifying issues particular to the Ministry of the Environment and solutions appropriate to this Ministry included interviews with management and bargaining unit staff, the solicitation of staff views by letter, the analysis of statistical records of the Human Resources and Personnel Development Branch, presentations from a variety of public and private sector organizations, and the review of recent human resources literature.

The overall findings of the Task Force are that there is a need for:

- an increased and visible commitment by senior management to some key principles of human resources management;
- the introduction and continued use of better processes for the management of human resources. The need for improvements in the areas of performance management, training and development, classification, and communications were specifically identified; and
- a modified and more responsive structure which would permit managers to participate more fully in the management of assigned human resources.

The Task Force recommends the creation of a Human Resources Planning Committee chaired by the Deputy Minister to guide the overall human resources management process, the creation of three Divisional Personnel Working Committees to provide operational guidance on classification, recruitment, and staffing issues within the Divisions, and a Staff Relations Committee to deal with disputes and co-ordinate various internal communications activities.

The Task Force also recommends that the Human Resources and Personnel Development Branch be given a new role with emphasis on a service orientation and acting as facilitator for the key committees. To address the need for a more central and active role for the Deputy Minister, the Branch should report directly to him.

The majority of the Task Force's remaining recommendations can be implemented within the present authority of the Deputy Minister. However, there are several recommendations considered important to the success of this initiative which would require action by the Human Resources Secretariat, primarily regarding revisions to the present "merit" system of pay.

The Task Force believes that acceptance of the recommendations in this report would place both the Ministry and all Ministry employees in a position of partnership in dealing creatively with human resources issues, and establish the Ministry in a leadership position in the public sector in terms of effective human resources management.

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HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE

Mandate

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the Ministry of the Environment Task Force on Human Resources Management. The Task Force was established by the Deputy Minister, R.M. McLeod, Ministry of the Environment, in April 1986, and was directed to report back on a wide range of human resources management issues.

Terms of Reference

1. Assess the effectiveness of current Ministry of the Environment human resources management policies.
2. Develop recommendations for improving the Ministry plan which reflect state-of-the-art human resources management principles and practices.
3. Develop an implementation plan and schedule for these recommendations.

Membership

The Task Force was sub-divided into three sub-committees to deal with issues and develop position papers. The sub-committee members also met as a committee of the whole where all the findings were reviewed, integrated and incorporated into this report.

<u>SUB-COMMITTEE</u>	<u>TASKS</u>	<u>MEMBERSHIP</u>
1. Human Resources Operations	(a) Human Resources Branch Role	Bill Tobin Al Symmonds Rick Quirk Nels Conroy
	(b) Staff/Management Relations	
	(c) Role of Division Heads/Directors/Managers	
	(d) Communications	

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|--|---|
| 2. | Classification/
Compensation | (a) Classification
(b) Compensation
(c) Parallel Streaming
(d) Pressure Jobs | <u>Joyce Gulbis</u>
<u>Bill Balfour</u>
Cathy Germa
Ann Vajdic
Boris Boyko- |
| 3. | Human Resources
Planning | (a) Career
Development
(b) Training/
Orientation
(c) Succession
Planning
(d) Recruitment
(e) Performance
Appraisal
(f) High/Low Performance | <u>Barbara Coyne</u>
<u>Robb Smith</u>
Carole Calder
Gerry Ronan
Frank Wright |

NOTE: Chair underlined

Committee of the Whole

Comprised all sub-committee members, chaired by Gerry Ronan, vice-chairpersons Rick Quirk, Boris Boyko.

PREAMBLE

The primary goal of the Task Force was to develop broad recommendations for improving the Ministry of the Environment's human resources management programs.

Identifying elements of successful human resources programs was an important requirement in this task. The completion of an objective and critical assessment of current human resources management practices was another key stage in the process. From this assessment many recommendations have flowed, all designed to reflect better ways of managing human resources within the Ministry.

What also has emerged is the realization that there is no single "right way" of managing human resources. Human resources management is a complex process which should reflect specific organizational cultures and public service traditions. These in turn are locked into the dynamics of a rapidly changing and fiercely competitive market place. There are, however, key principles which must be integrated within the process to ensure success. The recommendations contained in the body of this report are designed to capture the essence of these key principles and incorporate them into a human resources management strategy.

CHAPTER I

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN THE ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE

Over the course of many decades, the Ontario Public Service has earned a reputation for competence, efficiency, effectiveness and sound professionalism in carrying out its mandate. Following the end of the Second World War, a tremendous thirty year period of growth resulted in many new demands for government services. The range and complexity of these new demands mirrored the rapidly changing technological society emerging in the post-war period.

Linked to this thrust has been tough international competition for world markets. These pressures in turn have placed powerful demands upon organizations to increase productivity to ensure economic survival. In both the public and private sector the focus has recently shifted to the management of human resources with the goal of developing or maintaining a competitive edge in the marketplace while meeting changing societal needs and expectations. Success in the marketplace has increasingly been linked to the quality of both the workforce and the workplace.

The perception of organizations as being "good places to work" is a common attribute of the more successful organizations. Unlocking the human resources management secrets which make organizations "good places to work" is what this report is primarily about.

The Ontario Public Service, like that of many other Canadian government bureaucracies, is saddled with several albatrosses. These tend to diminish both the public image of the bureaucracy, and the self-image of the individual employees. The oldest and hoariest albatross relates to the perception that the public service employee has total job security, and consequently lacks motivation to excel in work performance. The public is generally unaware that lay-offs, staff cutbacks, job redundancies, and constraint initiatives geared to reducing workforces while retaining the level of service, are an accepted fact of life for the public sector employee.

The myth of the indolent public service employee is another long standing and entrenched perspective locked in the public consciousness. This myth is particularly dear to the print media, which traditionally takes delight in depicting the typical government employee as a nine to five "red tape" fanatic more interested in enforcing rules than delivering the required service. Politicians also have found it difficult to resist kicking, from time to time, this mute, clock-watching bundle of mediocrity, which is forbidden to answer back. As a result, the government employee is required to function in an environment that is often hostile, and one in

which the fires of public resentment are regularly fanned. A low self-image is not conducive to high performance.

Another major impediment within the public service to the rewarding of strong performance and the stimulation of excellence is the narrow range of available reward options. The sense that mediocrity is the acceptable norm and excellence an aberration which goes unrewarded is pervasive throughout the service. Consequently, the performance management review process has not been effectively administered in the Ontario Public Service. Since the realization of individual achievement is directly related to having such a process in place, excellence is consequently pursued in an ad hoc manner rather than through a structured, organized process.

The public sector also suffers from an obsession with imposing rules to maintain central control. In the area of human resources management, this has imposed a "control image" over the function, and has tended to stifle both innovation and participation by the line managers. This involuntary abdication of responsibility by line managers has resulted in a poorly managed human resource, lacking direction and focus. This deficiency has been reinforced by the tradition of minimal involvement of senior management in the corporate human resources management process. Human resources management has been viewed as an "administrative" function bound by rigorous rules and guidelines, centrally administered, with little room or need for individual ministry discretion.

Notwithstanding the serious nature of these institutional weaknesses and external stresses, it is a tribute to the resilience and commitment of public service employees that the quality of service has not been radically weakened. There is, however, an urgent need to implement a forward looking human resources management strategy throughout the service. Implementing programs geared towards achieving quality in recruitment, the development and retention of highly motivated, productive and committed employees are top priorities.

This is the essence of the human resources management challenge that faces public sector management today. As earlier stated, there is no "right way" to manage human resources. What is certain is that a large-scale injection of senior management time, direction and commitment to the process is mandatory to ensure optimal return from the human resources management process. Rhetoric alone will not suffice. Time, commitment and action are the required management ingredients without which all new initiatives will atrophy and swiftly die.

CHAPTER II
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The Task Force assessed why certain organizations are considered "good places to work" by receiving presentations from Esso Petroleum and IBM, by attending a Financial Post seminar "100 Best Companies to Work For in Canada" and by reviewing recently published material. The Task Force identified the following key elements of good human resources management as reflected in current private sector practices.

Purpose and Direction

Formal identification of corporate goals appears to be a prerequisite. Such goals define the organization's raison d'etre, are usually few in number, and are self-explanatory. These goals, along with company values, are some of the sustaining forces of a sound human resource management practice.

Performance Management

A common element is the provision of a clear definition of what is expected of the employee, with this frequently being outlined in the "contract" portion of a performance appraisal.

Discussion of performance with the employee is another integral part of the process. This type of feedback is an on-going process and not one which takes place once a year at performance appraisal time. A meaningful dialogue is often established and maintained; manager/employee communications is a recurring theme prevalent in all quality organizations.

Such dialogue assists in identifying developmental needs considered necessary by both the employee and manager.

Another recurring theme in the best companies is that individual employee contributions and efforts are recognized and valued.

Reward and Recognition

Financial remuneration immediately comes to mind when considering a reward system. While accepted as significant, money as a reward is gradually being recognized as not the sole factor in human resource management, contrary to traditional management theories and philosophies. Compensation is generally viewed as a "hygiene factor", something that becomes important if not properly attended to.

A key feature of many of the quality companies is a rigid philosophy of promotion from within. Such a philosophy is only successful when coupled with a strong recruitment and management development program.

Another element often found in quality companies is that of special recognition of individual employees. This is usually done in an internally publicized manner through awards, in-house profiles, or low-cost incentive programs.

Communication and Teamwork

The emphasis placed on good communication is probably the most significant feature in quality companies. Employees are encouraged to provide comments through the use of employee surveys, an open door policy, and unique programs such as IBM's "Speak Up", a process where staff have the opportunity to communicate with senior management. Visible response is an essential component of these programs.

Many companies also ensure that no structural or operational barriers interfere with effective internal communication.

Human Resources Development

Most companies recognize the need to provide funding for either internal or external development systems. These include provision for technical training, personal development, and business training in areas such as communications and problem solving.

They have a formal orientation program that also incorporates the goals and values of the company in their material.

Training needs are generally recognized as continuous, whether they be of technical, personal, or management development nature.

Good companies consider it essential to assess corporate knowledge, skills and management needs, which are addressed through staff development efforts. Such efforts frequently include career development, planning and counselling, technical training, job rotation/enrichment, as well as management development of high performers.

Management Responsiveness

Many of the companies considered in this review exhibit considerable responsiveness in addressing staff issues and concerns.

A noteworthy feature is that problems are dealt with rapidly. Accountability and responsibility are frequently operative words rather than token words in quality companies.

Managers' Multiple Roles

In many successful companies, great emphasis is placed on the relationship between the manager and the employee. The manager is required to play many roles, e.g. facilitator, mentor, teacher, coach, developer, and perhaps most importantly, communicator.

Workplace Innovation

Many experimental approaches dealing with the organization and completion of work tasks are presently underway in North America. Quality circles, participative management, and flexible work schedules are geared towards giving the employee a sense of ownership in the product, a sense of control over the workplace, and a recognition of his or her contribution. All of these initiatives are circumscribed by the need to remain competitive and dynamic in a rapidly changing world. To the degree that management accepts this challenge and provides enlightened human resources management, will a company survive.

CHAPTER III

KEY VALUES, BELIEFS, AND PRINCIPLES

The Ontario Government's Management Philosophy, published in 1981, states:

The Beliefs

"The Government of Ontario believes that the effectiveness of its organization hinges on human resources and management process. The management process channels, in a purposeful manner, the vitality of each individual. It brings people together in goal-oriented teams and creates an efficient network of communication."

People

"Serving the public to the best of his or her ability is an essential aspect of every government employee's work. To maintain a high level, the government is committed to using the talents, initiative, and creativity of each employee. Along with this goes a dedication to fair treatment, growth and development of each individual."

The government believes that achieving one's own personal fulfillment is vital to excellence. It is, therefore, essential that every employee seek such fulfillment within the framework of government goals. Managers should endeavour to create a climate in which both personal and corporate objectives may be accomplished."

The above statements make it apparent that the Ontario Government is in the forefront of current human resources management philosophy.

It is useful in this context to examine the much publicized value system of IBM. IBM has in place one of the most effective and comprehensive private sector human resources management plans.

IBM stresses the following values:

- Respect for the individual
- Strive for excellence
- Provide the best service

Participants in the seminar on the "100 Best Companies to Work For in Canada" constantly emphasized the need to respect the dignity of the individual, to provide opportunity for growth and to communicate effectively the goals of the organization. Several Ontario ministries have also picked up on this theme of respect for human dignity and have established it as a cornerstone of their corporate human resources management "culture".

Within the Ontario Public Service there exist traditions of loyalty and professional integrity which are woven into the very fabric of the organizational matrix. These traditions must continue to be nurtured in an era in which the public's expectation to be instantly and fully informed on all matters relating to government business, places tremendous new pressures and responsibilities on the public servant. The nature of the Ministry of the Environment's mandate also requires the maintenance of a work environment which fosters scientific integrity and technical exactitude. Vigilance is required by all levels of government, both political and administrative, to ensure that these needs are met. Commitment to these principles is crucial to the value system of a politically neutral, career service organization.

The Ministry of the Environment should incorporate within its human resources management philosophy the following values and principles:

- i) Staff are the most valuable assets of the Ministry. All staff will be treated with respect and dignity.
- ii) The work environment will foster:
 - excellence in performance
 - a sense of equity, honesty, fairness and openness
 - a spirit of teamwork and co-operation
 - the health and safety of all staff
 - dedication and commitment in service to the public
 - opportunities for growth and development.
- iii) Traditions of loyalty, integrity and political neutrality in the conduct of government business will be maintained at all times.
- iv) Promotion of staff will be based on merit.
- v) Promotion from within will be linked to a progressive recruitment and development plan.

The Ministry of the Environment should adopt the following human resources management philosophy:

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY

"People are the most valuable resource in successfully meeting organizational objectives and in achieving excellence of service to the public. They should be managed sensitively, with respect for their individual dignity and integrity, in a safe work environment which presents to the entire workforce equal opportunities for growth and development within the framework of government goals."

Use of the terms "respect", "individual dignity" and "integrity" carry with them a responsibility to translate these words into actions which capture their essence and intent. Organizations which embrace the lofty language of human values in the workplace while treating the workforce as an expendable commodity are readily identifiable. The benefits which flow from "putting people first" are teamwork, commitment, loyalty, extra effort, and a harmonious work environment conducive to achieving the organization's objectives.

CHAPTER IV

MINISTRY HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES

When the Task Force was established, a number of human resources issues had already been identified as requiring examination. Some were specific to known areas of concern within the Ministry, such as parallel streaming and classification issues, particularly with respect to grievances; others were broader in nature and related to individuals' roles in human resources management within the Ministry and the Ministry's overall policy on managing its human resources. All of these areas had been identified as issues requiring attention in one or all of the following reports:

- i) Managing Human Resources in the Ontario Public Service (Moher Report)*
- ii) Human Resources Management Issues (Directors' Report)**
- iii) A Proposal to Improve the Operation of the Ministry of the Environment (Group of 14)***

Task Force Activities

In examining human resources management within the Ministry, the Task Force worked through a detailed issue analysis phase, followed by the development of recommendations.

a) Detailed Issue Analysis

The above three reports provided an initial reference base to the Task Force throughout its deliberations.

The key issues identified in these documents are summarized in Table 4.1. It is of interest to note that three independent reviews of human resources issues carried out within approximately the same time frame, identified many common concerns.

The Deputy Minister sent a letter to all staff inviting them to contribute their ideas to the Task Force. Forty-six submissions were received and these provided a valuable

* a Government of Ontario report on human resources released in March/86

** a report by 3 directors, commissioned by the Deputy Minister, on MOE human resources issues

*** a report by MOE middle management staff on operational and planning issues

TABLE 4.1 ISSUE IDENTIFICATION SUMMARY

Issues	Moher Report	Directors' Report	Group of 14
Ministry Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - human resources management has become synonymous with personnel administration - role of Deputy Ministers in human resource management is unclear - manager's role unclear leading to ineffective management and development of people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no firm and consistent commitment by senior management to development of Ministry human resources policy - Human Resources Branch is "rules" oriented - Director of Human Resources Branch should attend Divisional Directors meeting on a regular basis to open channels of communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lack of corporate direction
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - existing procedures unduly limit candidates base for management and excluded positions - appointments throughout OPS not always based on comprehensive search and a fair and thorough assessments of candidates 		
Career Development, Succession Planning, and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - planned staff development confined to conference/course attendance - usually staff initiated - financial constraints have tended to limit training development - no formal succession planning - managers must assume stronger role in guiding staff development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - training and development program should form part of a human resources development plan - "A" and "B" lists should be better utilized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no overall plan directed at staff training - no assessment process for identifying and pursuing training of staff with managerial potential
Classification, including parallel streaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20% of grievances within OPS are classification-related - position standards are out-of-date - classifications generally assigned to positions rather than individuals - many staff forced into administrative positions in order to progress financially 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - classification concerns specifically with respect to Administrative Managers, Environmental Technicians, Chemical Technicians, Safety Officers - technical expertise being lost to administrative/management stream due to lack of advancement opportunities in technical stream 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - staff must move from technical to administrative/management stream if they wish to advance - inconsistent application of compensating factors concerning classification
Performance Appraisal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - should be used to set performance goals, communicate expectations, provide feedback on performance, assess career potential and plan career moves - currently falls short of potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - performance management process should be strengthened and should form part of a human resources development plan 	
Staff-Management Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - managers generally do not understand collective agreement - employees not in bargaining unit have no voice in determining conditions of employment - poor communication has resulted in tension between management and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry communications program should form part of a human resources development plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need for improved communication Ministry-wide
Stress Jobs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - little recognition/reward for high stress jobs - staff require regular training in handling media 	
Excellent/Poor Performance (Recognition/Motivation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - managers unable to provide rewards for exemplary performance - managers should receive encouragement to deal effectively with problems of poor performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tools, other than money should be developed for rewarding high performance - complexity continues to grow regarding dealing with poor performers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - little distinction is made between high achievers and low resulting in little incentive to do a job well

focus on grass root concerns and staff perceptions respecting human resources services issues. The key issues identified by staff are summarized in Table 4.2.

In addition, ad hoc surveys and interviews were conducted by Task Force members with a cross-section of Ministry staff to obtain input in specific areas.

b) Development of Recommendations

To provide a wide scope from which to identify potential solutions, the Task Force arranged for a series of presentations by human resources professionals from both the private sector and ministries within the Ontario and Federal governments where some major human resource management initiatives had been undertaken recently. A list of the presentations is given in Table 4.3.

In addition, Task Force members attended a one day Financial Post conference emphasizing approaches to human resources management in several of the "100 Best Companies to Work For in Canada".

The following eleven position papers, developed by the Task Force, provide both a detailed analysis of the identified problem areas and recommendations for their resolution.

1. Performance Management
2. Staff Training and Development
3. Career Planning
4. Succession Planning
5. High/Low Performance
6. Roles in Human Resources Management
7. Recruitment/Staffing
8. Focus on Communication
9. Classification and Compensation Issues
10. Parallel Streaming
11. High Stress/High Pressure Ministry

Since the recommendations in the report are based on conclusions drawn from the issues analyses contained in the position papers, these papers should be read in conjunction with this report.

Summary of Issues

The following are summaries of the issues identified in the four key position papers. The full text of all position papers is presented in Appendix I.

1. Performance Management

The Moher Report recognized that the performance management process should be used by managers to set performance goals, communicate expectations, provide feedback on performance, assess career potential and plan career moves, and that as currently practised within the Ontario Public Service "performance appraisal" falls short of its potential.

Research on current practices within the Ministry of the Environment indicates that major deficiencies exist in the manner in which the performance review is addressed. One of the results of these shortcomings is that during the last fiscal year only 30 percent of Ministry staff underwent performance review.

Interviews were conducted as part of this research to determine staff perceptions about the process. Several common themes emerged from these interviews. These are detailed below:

- i) there is a lack of commitment to the performance management process at all levels of management within the Ministry, and a perception that the performance review is unimportant;
- ii) the performance review is a once-a-year exercise with, generally speaking, no formal follow-up;
- iii) those conducting and those receiving performance reviews have different impressions of what the performance management process is designed to do;
- iv) employees are supportive of the concept and would like a system in place which works and which would provide them with feedback on current performance, future expectations, as well as training and developmental possibilities;
- v) many staff feel that performance evaluation, as currently practised, is too subjective.

The performance management process has a major role to play in increasing and maintaining the Ministry's effectiveness and is the basis for many human resource planning activities. It should, therefore, be a key element of the Ministry's overall human resources development plan. By integrating performance reviews with development and career planning and succession planning, the organization is in a better position to enhance employee motivation and provide a more orderly and effective staffing process.

2. Staff Training and Development

A look at staff training figures across the Ontario Government and a comparison with figures for the Ministry of the Environment seems to indicate that the Ministry is "holding its own"; however, when these figures are compared with information from the private sector, the Ministry falls below what is considered an adequate level of participation.

The majority of courses attended fall in the technical/-professional category. However, there is little participation in courses geared to developing management/supervisory abilities and minimal attention to improving secretarial/clerical skills.

In interviews with staff to ascertain their perceptions of training and development programs, it became evident that weaknesses exist:

- i) there is no comprehensive training/development program in place guided by strategic directions or operational priorities;
- ii) course identification is generally left up to the individual; managers do not spend enough time assisting and encouraging employees to take appropriate courses;
- iii) insufficient time is spent training and developing staff; not enough training is offered to clerical/support staff;
- iv) frequently, "specialized" courses are offered only outside the province or area of employment, and attendance opportunities for Ministry staff have been severely limited;
- v) there are not enough courses specific to the Ministry's needs, particularly in the area of orientation.

In order to cope with the continually changing needs of the Ministry, more emphasis must be placed on the development of a well-trained, highly skilled, motivated and flexible work force capable of delivering current and future programs effectively.

3. Classification and Compensation Issues

A number of specific issues have been delineated which are the cause of significant concern. The following are the highlights of some of these issues:

- i) The pay policy of the Ontario Government is to be competitive, not to be the leader. However, as the Moher Report indicates, executive salaries are not

competitive. In addition with respect to professional engineers at the median salary level, Ontario is the lowest of government sectors and ranks below all but 7 of the 23 private sector categories surveyed.

- ii) There are several apparent inconsistencies in classification within various class series across the branches and regions of the Ministry, e.g. administrative managers, environmental technicians. Concerns have also been expressed with respect to the differences in classification of apparently similar functions in MOE and other ministries, e.g. chemical laboratory/medical laboratory technicians, safety officers.
- iii) Since 1983, there have been 227 grievances within the Ministry, of which 135 or 59%, were classification based. The Moher Report stated that approximately 20% of the grievances in the Ontario government were related to classification issues. 86% of classification grievances emanated from the environmental technician and maintenance worker series. The high number of grievances is related to the fact that the grievance route is the only mechanism available for dealing with apparent inequities.
- iv) There is a significant degree of confusion and misunderstanding concerning the relative weights assigned to compensable factors in classification.
- v) The present mandate of the Human Resources & Personnel Development Branch does not leave much room for line managers in the classification function. The Moher Report recommends greater involvement of managers in human resources functions.
- vi) A perception has developed over the years that, in order to progress within the Ministry beyond a certain level, it was necessary to move into "management", and take on the responsibilities involved in handling human resources. No parallel stream providing for advancement by a technical/scientific route is apparent.

4. Communication

Communication is an important factor in managing any organization. In the broad sense, communication is necessary to integrate human resources management with other Ministry planning processes and management functions. Effective communication together with the leadership of senior management is an important ingredient in the successful implementation of a human resources management program.

A number of references to the need for better communication is made in the Moher Report, especially in labour-management issues. The report prepared by the "Group of 14" points out a number of areas where lack of communication is an evident

problem within the Ministry, particularly with respect to advising staff of new policies, programs and government initiatives. Submissions by staff to the Task Force also dealt with communication and the need for improvements.

As well, all of the public and private sector presentations which were made to the Task Force stressed the need for better internal communications, both top-down and bottom-up.

Managers should be encouraged to communicate with their staff by holding regular meetings, to be open in communication style, and to take time out of busy schedules to sit and talk with staff. In effect, managers should manage people, not just projects.

A participative management style would provide a mechanism for consultation and feedback between staff and management. This approach creates additional opportunities for discussion, more brainpower for problem solving and trust among staff and between staff and managers.

Table 4.2

SUMMARY OF ISSUES RAISED BY STAFF

<u>Issues</u>	<u>Frequency of Reference</u>
Classification	40
Training	17
Performance Management and Rewards	15
Roles of Managers and H.R.P.D. Branch	15
Communications	16
Recruitment Policies	10
Career Planning	8
Credentialism	3
Parallel Streaming	4
Pressure Jobs	2
Other	9

Note:

A total of 47 written submissions were received, 5 of the submissions were from groups, and 42 were from individuals.

Table 4.3

Presentations to the Human Resources Task Force

Participant	Organization
<u>Private Sector</u>	
(1) Laurie Harley	IBM Canada Ltd.
(2) Peter Craig	Esso Petroleum Can.
(3) Grant Nuttall	Imperial Oil, Ltd.
<u>Ontario Government</u>	
(4) Lyn Ceglar, Director Management Services	Solicitor General
(5) Brian Quin, Manager Planning & New Programs	Human Resources Secretariat
(6) John Deans, Ingrid Benz, Program Planning Officers	Human Resources Secretariat
(7) David Burt, Director, Pay & Classification Branch	Human Resources Secretariat
(8) Mike Gage, Director Human Resources Branch	Citizenship & Culture
(9) Janice Service, Director Human Resources Branch	Transportation & Communications
(10) Harold Farrant, Director Personnel Services Branch	Natural Resources
(11) Anne Marie Clark, Affirmative Action Program Manager	Environment
<u>Federal Government</u>	
(12) Jean Guy Soliere Director General Staffing Policy	Public Service Commission

Seminar

A Financial Post seminar, "100 Best Companies to Work For in Canada" was attended.

CHAPTER V

MINISTRY HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Responsibility for administering human resources programs within the Ministry primarily resides with the Human Resources and Personnel Development Branch. The role of the Branch is to provide a full range of services and advice to Ministry branches in the administration and implementation of all government legislation, regulations and policies relating to the management of human resources. The Branch is also responsible for the development and maintenance of a human resources planning and development program, and the provision of staff counselling services.

A review of the activities of the HRPD has revealed that the components necessary for the delivery of an effective human resources management program are in place, although many of these activities have not been developed to their full potential. These activities are listed below:

- Recruitment
- Orientation
- Performance Appraisal
- Human Resources Inventory
- Career Planning
- Training and Development
- Retirement Counselling
- Classification and Compensation
- Staff Relations
- Occupational Health & Safety
- Communications
- Counselling
- Manpower Planning
- IPPEBS
- Benefits Administration

The Branch has functioned within the traditional "control" framework fostered by the Civil Service Commission. This is reflected in the operational practices of other Ministries' human resources branches. The value of this approach has been the relatively consistent and uniform application of policies and rules affecting human resources. Historically, with the provincial public service staff levels in excess of 80,000, it was the policy to have a strong, centralized control function in place, with a clear focus of authority and accountability.

Over the past few decades, however, there has been much research carried out on ways to improve the management of people. There now appears to be a consensus emerging that a centralized human resources management function is not the most effective way to manage people. Many successful organizations have now transformed their human resources branches into units with a service orientation, linked in a strong

partnership with line managers. The Moher Report also reiterated this need for a more central role for line managers.

The Task Force believes that the Ministry Human Resources and Personnel Development Branch can best fulfill its role by undergoing a transformation to a service-oriented operation. The successful implementation of such a change is contingent on line managers assuming much greater responsibilities in managing people. Line managers in the Ministry have historically played a very minor role in managing the staff assigned to them. In many cases it was an involuntary abdication of responsibility, due to the perception that this management function primarily resided with the Human Resources and Personnel Development Branch. The extremely technical nature of the Ministry has also resulted in many managerial positions being filled by staff who are more interested in technical management rather than in people management.

It is essential that line managers play a more central role in human resources management. Whatever management plan is adopted by the Ministry, it must, in order to be successful, ensure that the line manager is responsible and accountable for a broad range of human resource management activities. This will require a significant change in work priorities, with people management issues and technical issues competing on an equal basis for a manager's time.

The professionals within the Ministry involved in full-time human resources management will also be required to undergo somewhat radical changes in function and direction. Partnership and teamwork with line managers will need to become the driving principle of the entire operation. Significant additional changes will be required of all the parties involved to successfully achieve this new and challenging approach to people management. Time, energy and commitment will be required to bring about these essential role changes.

All of these changes can be rendered possible if there is strong support from senior management. The Task Force is convinced that many substantial benefits in both productivity and staff satisfaction would flow from this human resources management concept.

Conclusion

The results of the Task Force deliberations are encompassed in a series of recommendations setting forth both the framework for human resources management within the Ministry and the way in which such a framework would be used to deal with human resources issues. The recommendations do not seek to reflect some "ideal state" of human resources management; they must be seen as an attempt to reflect and resolve real and important human resources management issues. The recommended changes in how the human resources management process should function, who the actors should be, and who should orchestrate and direct the process, reflect the most current and successful approaches in use in leading private sector companies, and also in some parts of the public sector.

CHAPTER VI

MINISTRY HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT MODEL

Based on a review of all of the resource material, presentations and discussions with human resources professionals, the Task Force concluded that the key to the successful implementation of any changes would be the commitment and active involvement of senior management in the process. There was also consensus that line managers must play a central part in managing human resources and that the most effective role for a human resources branch would be one with a service orientation, with strong links to and support from senior management.

The Task Force, having reached this consensus, developed a human resources management model reflective of these requirements. Clarification of the primary role of The Human Resources Branch is central to the development of any model. The Task Force explored several options in this regard.

The first option was to retain the status quo. Based on an assessment of the successful approaches used today in human resources management, this option was found to be unsatisfactory. It was felt that retention of the existing control role would signal to staff that they should not anticipate any significant change in direction in Ministry human resource management. Such a perception could result in losing staff support and commitment for the new initiatives being proposed.

The Task Force considered the option of splitting the Branch into a "planning secretariat" and a "personnel operations" branch. The former would report to the Deputy Minister, the latter to the Executive Director, Financial and Administrative Services.

This arrangement would have the advantage of giving the Deputy Minister direct control and responsibility for human resources planning, without the day-to-day workload of personnel operations. Staff would interpret the change as a signal that a conscious effort was underway to improve human resources planning in the Ministry.

While this option has attractive features, in that it would place a greater emphasis on human resources planning functions, it would likely cause serious problems. It could be anticipated that the organizational difficulties associated with dual reporting relationships, which this separation would necessitate, would inhibit the smooth functioning of the branch. Another shortcoming would arise from the lack of integration of human resources activities and the potential to de-emphasize the operations functions. For example, the continuity and linkage requirements of various human resources management programs (training, development, staff relations) which would overlap the two organizational streams, were seen as obstacles to the

successful functioning of a "split" branch. It could also be foreseen that "second opinions" would frequently need to be sought before action could be taken. This requirement could lead to delays, a lowering of staff morale and a need for additional support staff.

The Task Force concluded that the "split" branch option was contrary to the whole thrust of the review, was not generally supported by professionals working in this field, and consequently should be rejected.

The recommended option is to have the Branch report directly to the Deputy Minister. This approach recognizes the central role to be played by the Deputy Minister in human resources management and the focus recommended by Moher and supported by the Human Resources Secretariat. While this reporting relationship will be unique in the Ontario Public Service, it is strongly supported by human resource professionals in both the private and public sectors.

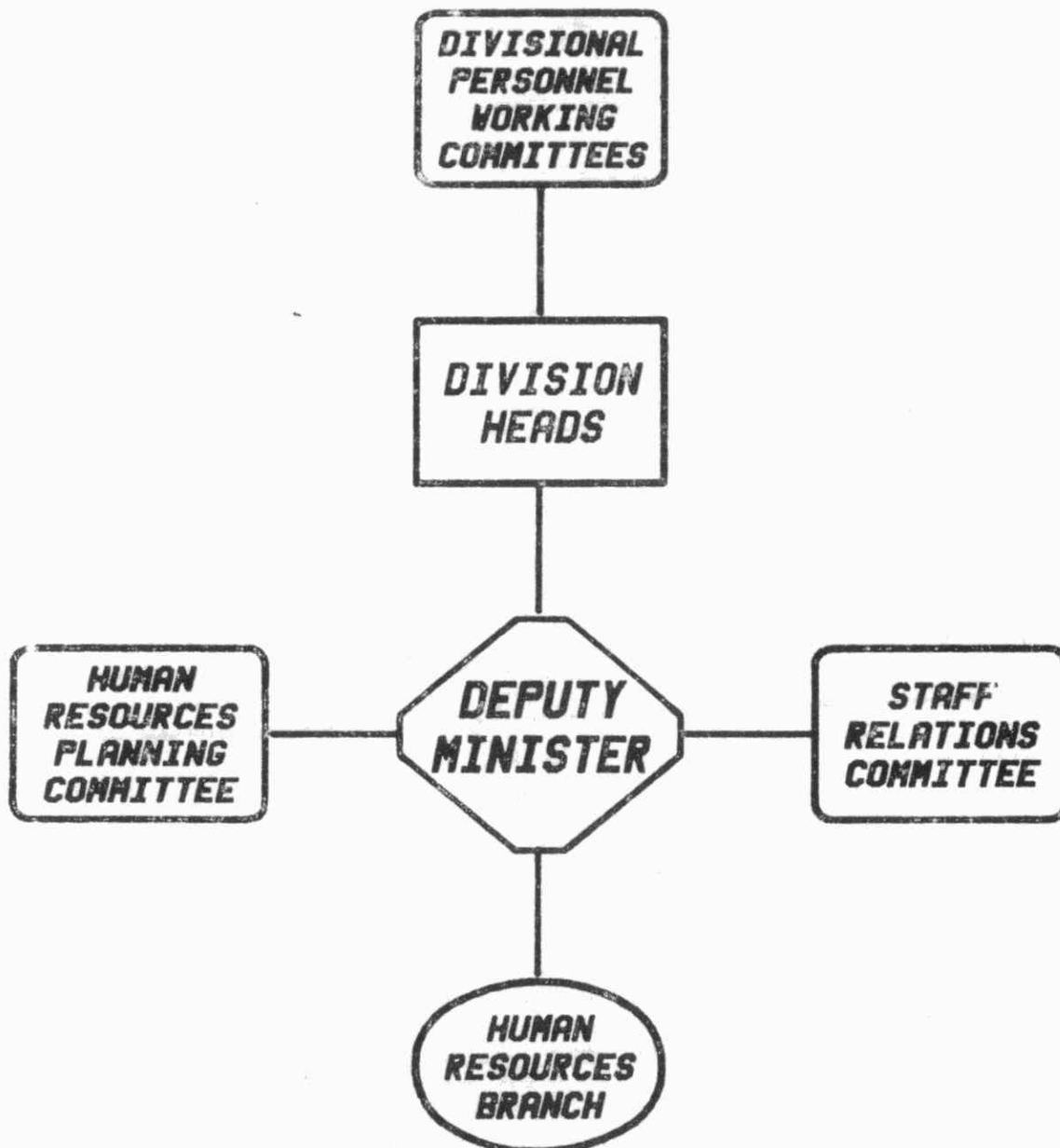
The human resources management model recommended for adoption by the Ministry reflects the enhanced role of the Deputy Minister. This role will substantially strengthen the process and provide an improved corporate focus and direction. It will also provide for much greater involvement of senior management, a crucial and essential element in successful human resource management plans. A major feature of the proposed management model entails the formation of several committees. The stature of the committees will result in rapid and effective decision-making with respect to the issues tabled for resolution. The larger role to be played by line managers and staff representatives on the committees will increase acceptance of the process. The model will provide a vehicle for the resolution of existing and emerging issues.

The new model will provide to staff a strong signal that positive changes in human resource management can be anticipated. The Human Resources Branch Director will have a direct reporting link to the Deputy Minister and Deputy Ministers' Councils and central agencies. As previously noted, the model provides for the integration of human resources management functions, a feature strongly recommended by many human resource professionals, and will provide an improved response time in dealing with issues.

A schematic of the model (see Figure 6.1) outlines the various inter-relationships.

The benefits to be gained by adoption of this model as the primary Ministry human resources management tool will not be without cost. There will be a much greater workload for all managers, especially senior management. All of them can

FIGURE 6.1



HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT MODEL

anticipate spending 15 - 20% of their time on human resources management for the system to work. However, the Task Force feels strongly that the benefits will be significant and will far outweigh any costs.

The following sets out the Terms of Reference for and membership of the proposed committees, Human Resources Planning, Staff Relations, and Divisional Personnel Working Committees.

Committee Structure

Human Resources Planning Committee

This Committee is structured to enable the Deputy and the Division Heads to play a strong role in human resources planning. It integrates all divisional manpower planning activities with the corporate strategic and operational planning activities of the Ministry. It is anticipated that this committee will need to meet quarterly, although, initially, it may be necessary to meet more frequently.

Terms of Reference

1. Ensure development of principles and strategies for all aspects of human resources management, including recruitment, career planning, succession planning, training and development and performance management.
2. Ensure that the human resources management processes of the Ministry achieve their desired results.
3. Manage the "A" and "B" lists.
4. Review and approve Ministry succession plans and career plans above specified job levels.
5. Provide direction to the Divisional Personnel Working Committees and the Staff Relations Committee.
6. Communicate to Staff Relations Committee information on human resource activities for dissemination to all staff.

Membership

The Committee would be composed of the Deputy Minister as Chairperson, all of the Division Heads, and the Director of the Human Resources Branch. In addition, a committee secretary should be designated by the Deputy Minister as a one year developmental assignment.

Staff Relations Committee

This Committee, reporting to the Deputy Minister, provides advice and direction on major staff relations issues by working closely with the Branches and the Employee Relations

Committee. It will also have the key responsibility for informing staff of human resources matters. While the Committee will report to the Deputy Minister, it is anticipated that much of the day-to-day decision making can be delegated to the Division Head designated as Chairperson. This Committee will meet monthly, although initially it may be necessary to meet more often.

Terms of Reference

1. Deal with classification disputes between Branch Directors and Human Resources Branch staff.
2. Review and make recommendations on issues arising from the interpretation of the Collective Agreement.
3. Review grievances with Ministry-wide implications.
4. Review and make recommendations to the Deputy Minister regarding series classification issues.
5. Ensure implementation of decisions from the Employee Relations Committee.
6. Communicate proceedings to staff and establish staff feedback process on human resources issues.
7. Develop and administer a "Suggestion Box" program.
8. Ensure action on health and safety issues.

Membership

The committee would be composed of one Division Head, to be appointed by the Deputy Minister to act as Chairperson; other members would include the Director of the Human Resources Branch, one Personnel Officer, a Director, two management staff, a bargaining unit representative from the Employee Relations Committee, a Safety Officer (bargaining unit) and one member-at-large from the bargaining unit. In addition, a secretary for the Committee would be designated by the Deputy Minister as a one year developmental assignment. The remaining membership on the Committee would be rotated on a prescribed time frame with consideration given to retaining Committee continuity.

Divisional Personnel Working Committees

These Committees (3) provide guidance for the day-to-day operation of human resources management and serve as a first line of referral and advice on human resources issues. They will integrate branch manpower planning activities into divisional priorities and provide input to the Human Resources Planning Committee. The wide representation on these Committees involves staff from all levels in the decision-making process. These Committees will report to the respective Division Heads. It is anticipated that each

Committee will need to meet monthly, although, initially, it may be necessary to meet more often.

The three Committees would be set up as follows:

- i) Operations Division
- ii) Environmental Services Division
- iii) Intergovernmental Relations and Strategic Projects Division, Financial and Administrative Services Division, Corporate Policy and Planning/Communications Branch, and Boards and Committees, Legal Services Branch.

Terms of Reference

1. Ensure compliance with recruitment strategy.
2. Priorize workload with respect to classification.
3. Recommend staffing options to meet program needs.
4. Act as first line of referral for human resource issues raised by managers and staff.
5. Identify divisional training and development needs and ensure that appropriate programs are implemented.
6. Serve as communication link for divisional staff on all human resource matters.
7. Communicate to Staff Relations Committee on human resource activities for dissemination to all staff.

Membership

The membership on each of the three Committees, at a minimum, would include a Director appointed by the Division Head to act as Chairperson; other members would include the Director of the Human Resources Branch, a Personnel Officer, Administrative Manager(s), a District Officer or Unit Head, a representative from managerial level, a representative from the bargaining unit and a representative of the Division Head, possibly an Executive Assistant. As well, where appropriate, consideration should be given to including a representative from Boards/ Commissions. The Division Head should appoint a secretary as a developmental position for one year.

Due to the size of some of the Divisions, it may be preferable that each Branch/Region have a representative on the Committee and numbers would increase accordingly. This should be left up to the discretion of each Committee.

Membership on the Committee should be rotated on a prescribed timeframe with consideration given to retaining Committee continuity by phasing in Committee replacements.

TABLE 6.1

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

<u>H.R. Planning Committee</u>	<u>Staff Relations Committee</u>	<u>Divisional Personnel Working Committees(3)</u>
<u>Members</u>		
Deputy Minister* Human Resources Branch Director Division Heads Secretary	Division Head * Human Resources Branch Director Personnel Officer Director Manager (3) ERC Rep (B.U.) Safety Officer(B.U.) Employee (B.U.) Secretary	Director* (3) Human Resources Branch Director Personnel Officer (3) Admin. Manager (3) D.O./Unit Head (3) Manager (3) B.U. (6) Divisional E.A. (3) Board/Commission reps (as appropriate) Secretary (3)
<u>Responsibilities</u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure development of H.R. principles & strategies for: - recruitment - career planning - succession planning - training & development - performance management - Ensure HRM processes are effective - Manage A & B lists - Review/approve succession/career plans - Provide direction to Working & Relations Committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deal with classification disputes - Review collective bargaining issues - Review grievances - Review classification series issues - Ensure ERC decisions are implemented - Develop and Administer Suggestion Program - Action health and safety matters - Communicate to staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure compliance with Recruitment Strategy - Prioritize classifications - Recommend application of constraint measures - Raise H.R. issues - Identify training & development needs - Serve as communication link to division
<u>Meetings</u> Quarterly	Monthly	Monthly
* Chairperson		

CHAPTER VII

RECOMMENDATIONS

The most lasting impression left with the Task Force from reviewing all the submissions and resource material was the sense that, unless senior management is fully committed to the process, the best designed human resources management plan will not properly function. Further, it needs the commitment of the chief executive officer, be it the deputy minister or the company president, to guarantee wholehearted support for the process throughout the entire organization.

A further point to note is that the field of human resources is varied and complex, and is one that is not amenable to cookbook answers or quick fixes to solve problems. It requires a great deal of time to build up trust in the process. Having achieved this trust, and building upon it, a tradition will be established which will auger well for the emergence in the future of a harmonious and challenging work environment.

Human Resources Values & Principles

1. The Task Force recommends that the Ministry should incorporate within its human resources management philosophy the following values and principles:
 - i) Staff are the most valuable assets of the Ministry. All staff will be treated with respect and dignity.
 - ii) The work environment will foster:
 - excellence in performance
 - a sense of equity, honesty, fairness and openness
 - a spirit of teamwork and co-operation
 - the health and safety of all staff
 - dedication and commitment in service to the public
 - opportunities for growth and development.
 - iii) Traditions of loyalty, integrity and political neutrality in the conduct of government business will be maintained at all times.
 - iv) Promotion of staff will be based on merit.
 - v) Promotion from within will be linked to a progressive recruitment and development plan.

Human Resources Management Philosophy

2. The Task Force recommends that the Ministry adopt the following human resources management philosophy:

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY

"People are the most valuable resource in successfully meeting organizational objectives and in achieving excellence of service to the public. They should be managed sensitively, with respect for their individual dignity and integrity, in a safe work environment which presents to the entire workforce equal opportunities for growth and development within the framework of government goals."

Management Model

3. In keeping with the key recommendations contained in the Moher Report, the Ministry should adopt the human resources management model outlined in the MOE Human Resources Management Model chapter of this report which requires the Deputy Minister to:
 - (a) play a central role in overseeing the implementation of the human resources management plan; and
 - (b) establish committees with broad staff participation to address human resources issues.

Role of the Human Resources Branch

4. The name of the branch be shortened to "Human Resources Branch", and that it be structured to reflect the increased emphasis on human resources management. The Human Resources Branch should reflect a service orientation rather than one of control.
5. The Director of the Human Resources Branch should report to the Deputy Minister.
6. A study should be undertaken to review the feasibility of transferring some of the Human Resources Branch duties to the Regions and Branches.

Performance Management

7. Senior management must fully endorse the importance of the performance management process in the effective management of human resources.
8. Senior management clarify the objectives of the performance management process and inform all staff of these objectives. The Ministry's current performance evaluation form should be reviewed to assess its appropriateness and applicability for use with all levels of staff.

9. All managers including senior management be evaluated on how well they carry out the performance management function.
10. Annual performance reviews be mandatory throughout the Ministry. Performance reviews of probationary staff should receive the attention of both the direct supervisor and the next higher level of management on a quarterly basis.
11. Ministry-wide criteria should be developed so that the designation of various degrees of performance is applied consistently by managers and staff.
12. A follow-up mechanism be instituted to monitor and audit the performance management process and its effectiveness.
13. A comprehensive ongoing education program for all employees be undertaken to improve the quality of performance management within the Ministry.

Staff Training & Development

14. The Ministry should undertake a review of basic skill requirements for all classes of jobs within the Ministry and determine the training/development courses appropriate to these positions.
15. Managers should become more involved in recommending courses staff take and use the performance management process as an opportunity to discuss with and make recommendations to staff on training/development needs. The management of high/low performance should be considered an essential part of the Ministry's management courses.
16. Branches and regions should identify separate budgets to provide for training/ development.
17. Essential training programs/courses be identified for staff entering the supervisory/management stream.
18. A training and development plan to accelerate the basic training of entry level staff should be implemented.

Career Planning

19. Identify and publicize developmental positions throughout the Ministry to facilitate the implementation of a career planning program.
20. Accelerate job secondment and job rotation initiatives, and provide the required budget to the Human Resources Branch (including costs of re-location).
21. Develop a program to familiarize staff with the challenges and realities of "career plateauing".

Succession Planning

22. Identify the key positions within the Ministry and develop a replacement planning program for these positions.
23. Develop and utilize a succession plan appropriate to the Ministry's and central agency requirements.
24. Senior management should institute a regular review process for the "A" and "B" lists to ensure the appropriateness of those nominated to these lists.
 - (a) The selection process be reviewed to ensure adequate breadth of search for nomination to the lists.
 - (b) The selection criteria be reviewed to ensure they are adequate to render eligible for consideration all staff with demonstrated potential for advancement to senior management positions.
25. Candidacy for the Ministry's "A" and "B" lists should be recognized only through performance appraisal reports.

High/Low Performance

High Performance

26. The Ministry should institute a uniform policy of providing accelerated merit increases to high performance employees, to ensure consistency of application.
27. Additional forms of recognition of high performance should be made available including:
 - opportunities for accelerated career development
 - non-monetary awards
28. The Human Resources Secretariat examine the application of performance-based system of pay for all classes of employees.
29. The Human Resources Secretariat examine the application of one-time bonus awards, to reward staff for outstanding achievements.
30. Mechanisms should be put in place to recognize group efforts, similar for those above for individuals.

Low Performance

31. Managers should be provided with and should better utilize support services to help them in dealing with low performance employees, both in identifying the reasons for low performance and in determining the best

methods for the manager and the employee to improve performance.

- (a) The adequacy of the tools available for handling low performance should be initially assessed in consultation with the Human Resources Secretariat.
 - (b) The range of support services available for handling low performance employees should be defined, and additional tools developed where required.
 - (c) Managers should be advised of the appropriate approaches to deal with the different categories of low performance.
32. Employees identified as having performance problems should undergo formal quarterly performance reviews.

Recruitment/Staffing

33. Establish "promotion from within" as a general recruitment principle.
34. Develop a recruitment strategy to ensure that high quality new graduates enter the organization so that the Ministry can continue to meet the challenge of a complex, rapidly changing environment.
35. A concerted effort should be made to streamline the recruitment process and reduce the recruitment time frame (now approximately 3 months) to a significantly shorter time period. Transfer the responsibility of the Vacancy Panel for determining what vacancies are to be filled to each Division Head or Branch Director.

Communication

36. Orientation programs presently being used in the Ministry should be updated, broadened and formalized, and tailored to individual section and branch needs as well as providing recognition of corporate goals and objectives.
37. Briefing sessions to inform staff of new Ministry and Government initiatives should be held periodically. Senior management should meet with staff at least once a year to discuss organizational goals, objectives and current issues.
38. Directives should be developed and issued detailing human resources management policies, guidelines and procedures.
39. Bi-annual employee opinion surveys should be carried out, the results conveyed to all staff and actions taken where necessary.

40. Directors should encourage managers to communicate with staff on a formal and informal basis.

Classification & Compensation Issues

41. The Human Resources Secretariat be requested to review the competitiveness of OPS salaries as compared to other governments and the private sector.
42. The Staff Relations Committee deal with the following classification issues:
 - a) examine intra and interministry classification discrepancies.
 - b) resolve differences between line management and Human Resources Branch regarding classifications.
 - c) monitor classification grievances to determine whether trends are developing and take appropriate action.
43. Classification decisions should remain with the Human Resources Branch pending further review of the impact of delegation.
44. Ministry management establish a "fast track" mechanism to resolve outstanding long-term major classification issues impacting upon major groups of Ministry employees (chemical lab technicians, environmental technicians, administrative managers and safety officers.)

Parallel Streaming

45. The proposed Staff Relations Committee be given the task of developing parallel streaming pathways for key ministry positions in consultation with the branches.

High Stress/Job Pressure

46. Managers undertake a review of jobs to identify those with a significant high stress component, and ensure that the job description reflect the stress component.
47. Management become more sensitized to the manner and mechanisms whereby stress is created in the workplace, with a view to minimizing its presence.
48. Training be provided to staff to assist them in handling the media, in dealing with the public, and in coping with stress situations.

Credentialism

49. All position specifications should be reviewed to ensure that only mandatory credentials are retained.

CHAPTER VIII

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Task Force recommends approval of an implementation plan to bring on-line the new human resources management strategy within the earliest possible time frame.

It is further recommended that an implementation team be established. A Steering Committee could be established composed of the three Directors involved in the Task Force with dedicated staff seconded to carry out the implementation. Alternatively, a Task Force member could be seconded as project manager in lieu of the Steering Committee. Two other options considered and rejected were to appoint a project manager from staff, but not on the Task Force, or to appoint a project manager from outside the Ministry. The Task Force recommends implementation headed by the Steering Committee with a Task Force member seconded as resource person.

An implementation timetable has been developed and charted (Figures 8.1 and 8.2) documenting the proposed completion dates for the key tasks.

TIMETABLE

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Formal acceptance by Deputy Minister and Division Heads and designation of implementation team | Sept. 3/86 |
| 2. Letter from Deputy Minister to all Branch Directors with copies of the Task Force Report indicating need for their support and participation and announcing Directors' Meeting | Sept. 5/86 |
| 3. Directors' Meeting - "The Human Resources Task Force Report and Implementation Plans" | Before
Sept. 30/86 |
| 4. Letter from Deputy Minister to all staff communicating results of Task Force deliberations | In conjunction
with Directors'
Meeting |
| 5. Identify Human Resources Branch staffing needs | Sept. 30/86 |

6. Establish Ministry Committees
 - Divisional Personnel Working Committees (3)
 - Staff Relations Committee
 - Human Resources Planning CommitteeOct. 15/86
7. All Committees to meet and review terms of reference and Task Force recommendationsNov. 14/86
8. All Committees to develop Work Plans and establish such sub-committees as are necessary to deal with specific issuesDec. 15/86
9. Employee information sessions at all major locations by Task Force teams (1/2 day sessions - 3 team members)Oct. 1 -
Oct. 31/86
10. Milestones for implementation of key recommendations
 - (1) Establish "fast-track" committee to review outstanding classification issues.Sept. 15/86
 - (2) Policy and procedures be developed for Performance Management.Jan. 1/87
 - (3) The training requirements determined for all major job families.Sept. 30/87
 - (4) Completion of review of decentralization of personnel functions.Feb. 25/87
 - (5) First bi-annual staff opinion survey conducted.June 1/87
11. Letter from Deputy Minister to all staff reviewing progress.Feb. 1/87

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TIMETABLE

FIGURE 8.1

PHASE 1 ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB
'86					'87	

FORMAL ACCEPTANCE OF REPORT BY DEPUTY MINISTER/DIVISION HEADS

LETTER TO ALL STAFF FROM DEPUTY MINISTER

LETTER TO ALL BRANCH DIRECTORS FROM DEPUTY MINISTER

DIRECTORS MEETING TO DISCUSS TASK FORCE REPORT

IDENTIFY HUMAN RESOURCES BRANCH STAFFING NEEDS

ESTABLISH MINISTRY COMMITTEES

COMMITTEES MEET TO REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMITTEES DEVELOP WORK PLANS AND ESTABLISH SUB-COMMITTEES

EMPLOYEE INFORMATION SESSIONS

LETTER FROM DEPUTY MINISTER TO STAFF REVIEWING PROGRESS

ESTABLISH "FAST-TRACK" COMMITTEE

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TIMETABLE

FIGURE 8.2

PHASE 2 TASKS COMPLETION

OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
'86				'87										

POLICY AND PROCEDURES DEVELOPED FOR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS DETERMINED FOR MAJOR JOB CATEGORIES

IDENTIFY AND PUBLICIZE DEVELOPMENTAL POSITIONS

DEVELOP SUCCESSION AND REPLACEMENT PLANS FOR KEY POSITIONS

DETERMINE REWARD SYSTEM FOR PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE

DETERMINE METHODOLOGY FOR DEALING WITH POOR PERFORMANCE

REVIEW DECENTRALIZATION OF THE PERSONNEL FUNCTION

STREAMLINE PROCEDURE FOR RECRUITMENT

FORMALIZED ORIENTATION PROGRAMS DEVELOPED

FIRST OPINION SURVEY COMPLETED

REVIEW OF CREDENTIALS NECESSARY FOR JOB

POSITION PAPERS

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INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of the Environment Task Force on Human Resources Management developed eleven position papers on current issues of concern within the ministry. These position papers were used as key resource material in arriving at the Task Force recommendations. The position papers should be read in conjunction with the Task Force Report. They provide a more comprehensive overview of the issues, and the rationale underlying the recommendations.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Introduction

Performance management is intended to be a continuous, interactive process through which managers motivate and direct employees to achieve optimum performance in their jobs. Performance review, workload planning, staff/management interaction, goal setting, training, career development, and flagging high/low performers, forms an integral part of an effective performance management system. It is intended to be future oriented with less than half of the review process devoted to past efforts.

It is widely accepted that the performance management process is a vital and essential tool to improve productivity, communications, and employee development, and yet it is just as widely recognized as the weakest link in most personnel systems.

The best private sector companies have recognized that their human resources when well-managed, well-trained and highly motivated, provide them with their competitive edge. Annual staff evaluations are an important part of their human resources management program and are used for goal setting and assisting employees to attain these goals. A large number of these companies use a "pay for performance" reward system for employees not bound by collective bargaining agreements. Rewards and sanctions are discussed in the position paper on High/Low Performance.

The recently released report, "Managing Human Resources in the Ontario Public Service" (Moher Report), has also recognized that "performance appraisal is used by the best managers to set performance goals, communicate expectations, provide feedback on performance, assess career potential and plan career moves". Moher goes on to state that as currently practised within the Ontario Public Service "performance appraisal" falls short of its potential.

Discussion

Research on current practices within the Ministry of the Environment has indicated that there are major deficiencies in the manner in which the performance management process is addressed.

It is government policy that yearly performance reviews be conducted with all staff. Despite this fact, and in spite of reminders from senior management that reviews must be carried out, during the last fiscal year the Human Resources and Personnel Development Branch received performance reviews for only 30% of Ministry staff.

In order to identify staff perceptions about the process within the Ministry, 31 interviews were carried out with a cross-section of staff from different branches and regions.

In discussing the Ministry's current performance management system in these interviews, several common themes emerged which are felt to be representative of perceptions across the Ministry:

- i) There is a lack of commitment to the performance management process at all levels of management within the Ministry, and a perception that the performance review is unimportant;
- ii) The performance review is a once-a-year exercise with, generally speaking, no formal follow-up;
- iii) The current system does not address many of the key elements that constitute a sound management process, such as workload planning, goal setting and career development;
- iv) There is a lack of overall integration in the context of a human resources development plan;
- v) Many managers feel they lack skills and time to carry out performance reviews effectively;
- vi) Those conducting and those receiving performance reviews have different impressions of what the performance management process is designed to do;
 - managers experience frustration that the performance review does not help them deal with problem employees
 - staff feel the performance review is frequently used as a critical tool rather than as a goal-setting and developmental mechanism
- vii) Staff at all levels are supportive of the concept and would like a system in place which works and which would provide them with feedback on current performance, future expectations, as well as training and developmental possibilities;
- viii) Many staff feel that performance evaluation by management, as currently practised, is too subjective.

During the review process the Task Force was made aware of a number of approaches currently in use in conducting performance reviews. In addition to a wide-range of formats, many organizations have developed several different appraisal techniques for use with different staff levels. Because the

benefits for the organization from an effective performance management process can be substantial, actions need to be taken immediately to enhance the use and quality of performance reviews within the Ministry and to ensure that the most appropriate format and technique(s) are in place.

Throughout the human resources planning process, senior management has a key role to play. Nowhere is this role more important than in the development and implementation of an effective performance management system. At the outset, senior management must fully endorse the system. This commitment should also be reflected at every other management level throughout the organization. As well, all managers should be evaluated on how well they carry out the performance management function. Senior management has the responsibility to ensure that all managers understand the objectives of performance management and that these objectives are communicated clearly to all staff.

For planning purposes, to help capitalize on employee strengths and to identify and improve weaknesses, annual performance reviews must be mandatory for all employees. However, this does not remove the necessity and, in fact, the obligation on the part of all managers to be continually reviewing staff performance and advising on training needs and developmental opportunities.

Any performance management system, however, is only as good as those people who are using the system, whether they are conducting the review or being reviewed. In order to improve the quality of performance reviews within the Ministry, a comprehensive ongoing education/orientation program for all employees should be undertaken as a priority of the organization.

The performance management process has a major role to play in increasing and maintaining an organization's effectiveness and is the basis for many human resource planning activities. It should, therefore, be a key element of the Ministry's overall human resources development plan.

Recommendations

1. Senior management must fully endorse the importance of the performance management process in the effective management of human resources.
2. Senior management should clarify the objectives of the performance management process and inform all employees of these objectives.
3. Senior management and managers should be evaluated on how well they carry out the performance management function.

4. Annual performance reviews should be mandatory throughout the Ministry. Probationary employees should be evaluated more frequently.
5. A follow-up mechanism needs to be instituted to monitor and audit the review process and its effectiveness.
6. A comprehensive ongoing education/orientation program for all employees should be undertaken to improve the quality of performance reviews within the Ministry.
7. The Ministry's current performance evaluation form should be reviewed to assess its appropriateness and applicability for use with all levels of staff.

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Staff training and development encompasses activities intended to improve current or future performance of staff by imparting information, conditioning attitudes or increasing skills.

A recent survey of a number of highly successful, technically-oriented American companies indicates that they allocate significant staff time to training -- an average of 21 hours per year per employee; an average of 41 hours per year per manager. Certain types of training, such as orientation programs are considered fundamental for all employees and corporate goal/strategy sessions for all managers are considered critical. As well, large amounts of corporate financial resources are dedicated to training. They also protect training budgets during times of budget constraints. IBM, as an example, places great importance on maintaining a high profile staff training program. In 1985 alone, IBM spent close to \$3,000 per employee on education, including technical subjects and courses on the business environment, communication and problem-solving skills.

Discussion

A look at staff training figures across the Ontario government and a comparison with figures for the Ministry of Environment seems to indicate that we are "holding our own".

The following are comparison figures* for 1984/85 taken from the "Summary of Staff Development in the Ontario Public Service 1983/84 and 1984/85".

1. Staff development days as % of total days worked

	Female	Male	Average
MOE	1.66%	2.28%	1.97%
Govt.	.89%	1.52%	1.26%

2. Distribution of participants by type of course/program

	MANAGERIAL SUPERVISORY	TECHNICAL PROFESSIONAL	INTERPERSONAL PERSONAL	SECRETARIAL CLERICAL
MOE	7%	86%	7%	0%
Govt.	13%	70%	15%	2%

* The figures used do not refer to each employee, but rather each participant. The participant rate refers to the number of participants expressed as a % of the Ministry population. Female participation is expressed as a % of the female population of the Ministry. The same is true for males. Employees may have participated in staff development programs more than once.

3. Distribution of staff development expenditure by type of course in %

	MANAGERIAL SUPERVISORY	TECHNICAL PROFESSIONAL	INTERPERSONAL PERSONAL	SECRETARIAL CLERICAL
MOE	10%	82%	8%	0%
Govt.	17%	58%	23%	2%

An analysis of these figures and others from the staff development report indicates that in certain key areas little attention is being paid to staff development.

The majority of courses attended fall in the technical/professional category. However, there is little participation in courses geared to developing managerial/supervisory abilities; and minimal attention to improving secretarial/clerical skills.

In an effort to elicit staff perceptions concerning Ministry of the Environment training and development programs, 47 interviews with a cross-section of staff from various Branches/Regions were carried out.

The following represents common themes and conclusions drawn from these interviews:

- i) There is a lack of any planned training/development program in place, and the Ministry should spend time identifying training needs and communicating these needs to all staff;
- ii) Course identification is generally left up to the individual, and managers do not spend enough time assisting/encouraging employees to take appropriate courses;
- iii) Insufficient time is spent on training and developing staff; not enough training is offered to clerical/support staff, i.e. word processing courses; not enough time is spent in keeping up technical/professional skills, resulting in some slippage of expertise;
- iv) There is a lack of a uniform approach to training, particularly where jobs are similar; basic training levels should be set for all jobs;
- v) Frequently, "specialized" courses are offered only outside the province or area of employment, and attendance opportunities for Ministry staff are severely limited -- distance/cost should not be an impediment to attendance;

- vi) An overall provincial training policy should be established;
- vii) More courses should be adapted to the Ministry's particular needs, including corporate orientation courses; there should be more in-house courses, i.e., how other branches function.

While the competitive edge that is the concern of most private sector organizations may not be a factor for the Ministry, maintaining credibility in a highly-technological, rapidly changing environment certainly is. In order to cope with the continually changing needs of the Ministry, consideration must be given to the development of a well-trained, highly skilled, motivated and flexible work force capable of delivering current and future programs effectively.

To achieve this, a strategy needs to be developed which will identify the crucial skills required for each job, as well as how those skills will respond to the Ministry's needs, and then to ensure that staff are developed appropriately to meet Ministry requirements now and in the future.

Initially, the Ministry needs to set in place an orientation program for all new employees. This program would serve to introduce the new staff member to the Ministry, its goals, structure and programs and will enable the new employee to adapt more quickly to his/her new environment.

All positions have basic identified skill requirements which are needed to deliver successfully a consistent, uniform program. Training and development programs should be matched to these skill requirements. Where the employee does not possess all of the necessary skills to perform the job effectively, training/development becomes essential. By matching available training and development programs to skill requirements (for all positions) it is immediately discernible to both the staff member and management what courses are required to ensure that the program needs are being met.

To remain effective, staff must be continually upgrading their skills. Courses are available to ensure that Ministry staff retain their expertise and it is management's responsibility to encourage staff to keep their skills current and to recognize that specialized courses are frequently offered outside the province. This should not pose a barrier to attendance. Training and development are equally important in clerical/support positions as in the technical/professional stream and managers must be cognizant of the need to improve attendance at courses/conferences for clerical/support staff.

The Ministry's staff development section, through its many contacts, should maintain a schedule of courses, seminars and

conferences of both environmental and general interest. In order to provide the essential consultative service to Branches and Regions regarding appropriate courses to meet individual/position needs, the section should be strengthened. This would facilitate the provision of courses tailored to the specific needs of the Ministry and of in-house workshops on the functioning of key sections of the Ministry.

Currently, Branches/Regions do not designate specific dollars for staff training and development. This has the potential, during times of constraint, to erode training/development opportunities because of budget cutbacks. A specific line item for training and development would allow a quick assessment of both costs and current activity, as well as protecting training/development dollars when budgets are reduced. Travel and accommodation costs should be separate from course/conference registration fees.

Planning for staff training and development is the joint responsibility of the line manager and the employee. A key tool in accomplishing this is the performance management process. Through this review a manager, working with the employee, can design a work-related training/development program for each employee.

Work-related training/development programs can enhance employee motivation particularly when the employee has worked with the manager in establishing specific performance goals. This mutual goal setting exercise helps to direct activity by providing the employee with a clear idea of what is expected. The exercise generally results in greater effort being applied to particular tasks and a determination to achieve the established goals. Employee participation helps to ensure acceptance of the process. Developmental planning can also be the first step in career planning.

Recommendations

1. The Ministry should undertake a review of basic skill requirements for all classes of jobs within the Ministry and determine the training/development courses appropriate to these positions.
2. The Ministry should encourage more staff training; managers should become more involved in recommending the courses staff take and use the performance management process as an opportunity to discuss with and make recommendations to staff on training/development needs.
3. Branches and Regions should identify separate budgets for training/development; training/development budgets should not be the first to be cut during times of constraint.
4. Essential training programs/courses should be identified for staff entering the supervisory/management stream.

5. A training and development plan geared to accelerate the basic training of entry level staff should be implemented.
6. The Ministry should strengthen its capability to provide consultative and co-ordinating services for training and development.

CAREER PLANNING

Introduction

Career planning has two main purposes. The first is to provide a mechanism to ensure that an individual's assignment preferences and career aspirations are given consideration as part of an organization's human resources planning process. The second purpose is to provide a framework wherein an organization's current and future manpower skill needs will be effectively met as a result of the development process.

Career planning is an important element in implementing a comprehensive human resources management plan. In the private sector, IBM is often cited as an example of a company where career planning is a major component of their staff management process.

Career planning requires that a well-thought out recruitment strategy be in place, supported by a strong training and development program which in turn is linked to a good quality performance management system.

Discussion

The first step in the career planning process is recruitment. The Ministry should have in place a recruitment strategy whereby entry level positions are identified for all the key units or disciplines. To remain dynamic, organizations need to go to the marketplace to bring an infusion of fresh blood and new ideas to the workforce. The goal in recruiting should be to seek out the top quality entry level candidates. Top quality candidates are generally attracted to organizations with well-defined career development programs. A recruitment strategy should also make provision for the need to hire specialists who possess unique skills not readily available from within.

Promotion from within the organization is a key principle of successful career development programs. Adoption of this principle signals to staff that the organization is prepared to provide them with both opportunities and challenges.

To succeed, the career planning process also requires that a staff training and development program be an integral part of the human resources management plan. Training and development is particularly important during the first five years of

an employee's association with the organization. The training and development program should have modules which provide sequential training, from introductory to advanced, in the following categories:

- orientation
- "people" skills
- scientific and technical
- administration
- office automation
- management and supervision

Should staff wish to move into the management stream, they would be required to take specific courses which would be a pre-condition to filling various management level positions. The technical stream may require a similar set of conditions regarding the taking of courses.

Career planning is very often linked to the performance review. Many leading companies separate these functions to avoid some of the conflict overtones associated with performance review and to provide a higher profile to the career planning process. While the Ministry of the Environment presently combines these functions, it may be useful to review the effectiveness of both approaches.

In order to implement a career planning process successfully, an organization requires the following:

- i) An up-to-date skills inventory which focusses on organizational skill needs, including entry level positions;
- ii) Positions identified throughout the organization which are categorized as developmental;
- iii) Access to training and development courses which will demonstrably fulfill development needs of the candidates and the organization;
- iv) A well understood and accepted staff rotation/-secondment process to facilitate the career planning process;
- v) Acceptance by management personnel that staff participating in these programs will not be fully available in the short term for line assignments.

Career plateauing, the disappearance of advancement opportunities, is an organizational reality. Many competent staff reach a point in their careers where new challenges will need to be found through job enhancements or secondments rather than upward progression in the organization. Staff awareness sessions will need to be introduced to reinforce the positive alternatives associated with the career plateauing phenomenon.

It is apparent that career planning is yet another essential link in the human resources management chain. It cannot

function in isolation, and is totally dependent on having in place an integrated recruitment, training and development, and performance management process. If an organization wants to attract and keep top quality people, then all of these human resources management links should be in place.

Recommendations

1. Develop, maintain and utilize a Ministry skills and human resources inventory.
2. Establish "promotion from within" as a general recruitment principle.
3. Identify and publicize developmental positions within the Ministry.
4. Establish a formalized job secondment/rotation process and provide a re-location budget within the Human Resources Branch.
5. Develop a recruitment strategy to ensure that a steady stream of high quality trainees enter the organization.
6. Implement a training and development plan geared to accelerate the basic training of entry level staff.
7. Develop a training program to familiarize staff with the challenges and realities of "career plateauing" within organizations.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

Introduction

Succession planning is a strategic activity which focusses on the development of a diverse, qualified pool of candidates who may succeed to given positions within an organization when such positions become vacant. A properly implemented succession planning program will ensure the development of broadly experienced and resourceful managers who are able to meet the current and future needs of the organization. It is effective, however, only when closely linked to human resources planning activities, such as performance management and career planning, and only when tailored to the specific needs of the organization it is to serve. While attention is usually directed at managers within an organization, special attention is given to women and minorities, primarily to spot talented individuals early in their careers and plan for their development.

Before discussing how organizations begin to plan for succession, it is useful to take a brief look at succession planning's first cousin, replacement planning. Replacement planning identifies replacements for people in jobs that currently exist within an organization. However, replacement planning, unlike succession planning, does not address an organization's future requirements.

Discussion

There are three elements that must be present within an organization before consideration can be given to succession planning.

As with other human resources planning activities, the first and most important is the commitment and active involvement of senior management in the development and implementation of a succession plan. While an actively involved Human Resources Branch is necessary, generally the branch has too little authority to drive a comprehensive planning effort alone. Therefore, without the support of senior management most attempts at building a "people planning" system are doomed.

The second ingredient is a clear understanding of the organization's objectives, the rationale being that if the objectives are understood, the structure required to implement them can be defined. If this understanding is lacking, only educated guesses can be made about the kinds of positions and individuals that will be needed in the future.

Last, but by no means least, is an effective performance management system. A reliable and objective program for reviewing and evaluating an individual's current performance, career interests and developmental needs, coupled with a

subjective or judgmental assessment of the individual's managerial attributes, ability to function in different situations and interpersonal skills, will enable senior management to make determinations about his/her potential for a leadership role within the organization.

When looking at appropriate succession planning programs, an organization must consider not only the current work environment, but also the work environment of the future. In this regard, consideration should be given to predicted demographic changes, such as more women and minorities in the work force and a steadily aging work force, and the retirement projections for management staff.

Development of staff is a management responsibility and crucial to planning for succession is a well-trained, highly developed work force from which candidates can be selected. Managers must review continuously the abilities of their staff and ensure that they are trained for positions of higher responsibility. A comprehensive training/development program for all positions (see Staff Training and Development position paper) will provide the organization with a range of qualified staff from which to select candidates for succession planning. Techniques such as developmental assignments where, through rotation to several different positions, individuals can gain exposure to a wide variety of organization functions, can be used to enable candidates to tap their management skills and to enable senior management to assess their potential for promotion.

Succession planning, however, does not remove the necessity for effective recruitment and organizations should combine internal development with external recruitment to ensure a high calibre of talent within the succession pool.

There are a number of key areas integral to the development of a succession plan that an organization must address at the outset.

Senior management must first determine the positions it wishes to consider filling through the succession planning process. This should include an analysis of current and future needs. Initially, only key, senior positions may be involved in succession planning. Once this has been done a review of the incumbents should be carried out to determine their potential to move within the organization or the length of time to retirement. This review will provide the succession planners with an indication of when designated positions will need to be filled.

This is the point in planning for succession where understanding an organization's objectives becomes important. Being aware of these objectives will enable succession planners to determine the knowledge and experience that will be needed to fill future positions and vacancies, including the "subjective" attributes necessary for success, such as interpersonal skills and adaptability.

A considerable amount of time needs to be spent reviewing potential candidates for the succession plan. In determining who these individuals will be, tools such as objective and subjective assessments by more than one senior manager, peer assessment and self-assessment of career aspirations and developmental needs should all be considered. Screening for candidates should be wide and flexible. Senior management should be encouraged to look into the organization at specific positions in an effort to spot high potential individuals early, particularly in the case of women and minorities.

While in some instances individuals who are selected for the succession planning process will be ready immediately to move into a more senior position, others will not be. For those who are not, senior management must ensure that the necessary developmental opportunities are provided.

The final crucial area that needs to be addressed by management is the question of confidentiality versus openness of the succession planning process. The literature is divided on this point. Those favouring confidentiality feel that advising staff who are considered to have the potential to move up within an organization that they have been "chosen" can create the impression of an "elitist" or "favoured" group. The proponents of openness argue that most staff are aware that they have been selected as candidates for the succession planning program. As well, by being open about the selection process, management minimizes the possibility of other staff feeling that there is a "favoured" group. Succession planning should be a signal to all staff that there are possibilities for upward movement within the organization.

Until recently, beyond the development of "A" and "B" lists, government had done little formal succession planning. In some instances individuals may have been promoted to middle and senior management positions without sufficient opportunity to master their new responsibilities. Essential skills and knowledge frequently have been acquired "on the job" rather than in preparation for it.

In some ways, this approach is justified since key positions tend to be shaped by the individual doing the job. As well, those in line for senior management positions have generally been involved in training/development programs. Planning for succession, however, provides a more effective method for ensuring that key positions within an organization are filled by appropriate, well-qualified individuals.

Succession planning and replacement planning are both workable concepts. However, before beginning to look at either planning for succession or replacement planning, the Ministry must first ensure that the tools needed to develop and implement a plan are available.

The commitment of senior management to the process is essential. Coupled with this, the Ministry must have in place a performance management system that works and that will provide senior management with both objective and subjective assessments of staff. As well, a training and development program, designed to meet the current and future needs of the Ministry, will ensure that well-trained individuals are available for consideration as candidates for succession planning.

In developing the "A" and "B" lists, the Ministry has taken one of the first steps in succession planning, by identifying individuals with potential for advancement. The selection criteria used in establishing these lists can act as guides to senior management. The "A" and "B" lists should not be discarded when considering a succession planning program, but should be reviewed to ensure the appropriateness of the individuals on the lists.

Those designing a succession planning system must also ensure that it is relevant not only to the Ministry, but also to central agency requirements. In planning for succession within government, consideration should be given to the individual's ability to move upward, not just within Environment, but within other ministries and agencies. A number of ministries are beginning to look at succession planning as a viable tool in ensuring continued excellence within the Public Service. In looking at one ministry as an example, three tiers of succession planning have been established:

- i) backup for critical positions within the Ministry
- ii) promotability to a senior position within the ministry; and
- iii) input to the corporate "A" and "B" lists.

Individuals from the 17-22 level (15-22 level for women), or equivalent, are targetted for review as possible candidates for inclusion in the succession plan. The Ministry should draw on this experience in developing its own succession planning program.

The objectives in succession planning are to ensure that the key positions in any organization are well-staffed, that managers with potential are being developed and that each area within the organization has the human resources needed to respond to the demands placed on it.

The challenge in succession planning is to turn these objectives into realities.

Recommendations

1. Identify key positions within the Ministry and develop a replacement planning program for these key positions.
2. Develop and utilize a succession plan appropriate to the Ministry's and central agency requirements.

3. Senior management should institute a regular review process for the "A" and "B" lists to ensure the appropriateness of those nominated to these lists.
 - a) The selection process be reviewed to ensure adequate breadth of search for nomination to the lists.
 - b) The selection criteria be reviewed to ensure they are adequate to render eligible for consideration all staff with demonstrated potential for advancement to senior management positions.

HIGH/LOW PERFORMANCE

Introduction

The Ministry's current performance appraisal system defines high performance as the consistent performance by an employee at a level far in excess of the requirements of the job in all key areas. Low performance is defined as performance at a level which does not meet the requirements of the job.

For any performance management system to be meaningful, it is necessary to distinguish clearly between high performance employees and low performance employees. The high performance employee should be clearly acknowledged, both as a reward for outstanding contribution to the Ministry and as a means to encourage other staff to higher performance. The chronic low performance employee should also be clearly identified both to elicit improved performance from the individual and as an indication of management concern.

The means currently available to the Ministry to distinguish between high and low performance are unfortunately not adequate. Most employees not at the top of their classification automatically receive a 5% annual merit increase unless their performance is unsatisfactory, and once an employee is at ceiling, the performance-based reward system becomes inoperable. This situation may partially explain the lack of interest in performance management across the Ministry. It is believed that little can be done either to reward high performers or to address the problem performers.

This issue is not peculiar to the Ministry of the Environment. A report entitled "Performance Appraisal Review" (April, 1986) by the Human Resources Secretariat identifies the need for innovative approaches to address this problem and proposes joint Ministry - Secretariat initiatives in this area.

Discussion

The Ministry manual "Conducting Staff Performance Appraisals" (1977) provides a sequence of steps managers can follow in dealing with all types of performance management issues, from a simple lack of technical skills right through to a case of chronic unsatisfactory performance. Progressively stronger forms of remedial action - counselling, retraining, transfer, demotion, dismissal are available. Nevertheless, the extraordinary effort and time required to implement the more severe options are seen as hindrances to effective action.

Recognition of high performance is associated only with the issuance of annual merit increases (where permitted), and to some extent through inclusion in the Ministry's "A" and "B" lists. Since nearly 80% of staff are at the top of their salary ranges, and since the "A" and "B" lists are applicable only to middle levels of management staff, neither of these award systems is relevant to the majority of Ministry staff.

The Task Force has investigated the possibility of performance-based financial payments which would not become part of the employee's base salary. This is an extension of the proposal outlined in the Moher Report for senior executives. Present policy does not permit this to be implemented. The issue of performance-based payments, therefore, needs to be addressed by the Human Resources Secretariat. The only mechanism (external to the merit system) by which an employee's pay rate may be increased is pay for "special assignments" which is addressed in the Manual of Administration, Volume II. When applicable, the Deputy Minister may make a recommendation to the Human Resources Secretariat that an employee be granted special pay because of an extraordinary assignment.

Non-financial rewards have never been implemented as Ministry policy, although their use is within the authority of the Deputy Minister and a number of other Ministries do use them successfully. Typical examples would include:

- special citations
- annual "Outstanding Employee Awards"
- the issuance of passes to Provincial centres
- opportunities for self-directed work
- advanced career development opportunities
- discretionary leave for outstanding performance

General Recommendations

1. Ministry-wide criteria should be developed so that the designation of various degrees of performance is understood consistently by managers and staff.

The use of such criteria would serve several purposes. First, employees would have less reason to question their categorization as low performers by their direct supervisors. Secondly, the erroneous categorization of employees would be eliminated.

2. The management of high/low performance should be considered an essential part of the Ministry's management courses.

Recommendations Concerning High Performance

1. Candidacy for the Ministry's "A" and "B" lists should be recognized only through performance appraisal reports.
2. The Ministry should institute a uniform policy of providing accelerated merit increases to high performance employees, to ensure consistency of application.
3. Additional forms of recognition of high performance should be made available.

4. Mechanisms should be put in place to recognize group efforts, similar to those above for individuals.
5. The Human Resources Secretariat should examine the application of a performance-based system of pay for all classes of employees.
6. The Human Resources Secretariat should examine the application of one-time bonus awards, to reward employees for singular outstanding achievements.

Recommendations Concerning Low Performance

1. Performance reviews of probationary employees should receive the attention of both the direct supervisor and the next higher level of management on a quarterly basis.
2. Managers should be provided with and should better utilize support services to help them in dealing with low performance employees, both in identifying the reasons for low performance and in determining the best methods for the manager and the employee to improve performance.
3. Employees identified as having performance problems should undergo formal quarterly performance reviews.

ROLES IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Introduction

Human resources management is one of the most important components of corporate management. In order to obtain information on strategies for excellence in human resources management, the Task Force listened to presentations from some of the most successful private sector companies, heard representatives from personnel branches in the public sector, both provincial and federal, and reviewed relevant literature including "100 Best Companies to Work For in Canada". In general the human resources management approaches were remarkably similar. A key element was the presence of a strong human resources philosophy and culture which had been in place for many decades. Another was the clear responsibility of managers for human resources management.

In organizations with excellent records in human resources management, the manager is responsible for human resource management whereas the personnel department is primarily involved in administration.

Discussion

A review of the activities of the Human Resources and Personnel Development Branch (HRPD) revealed that the components necessary for the delivery of an effective human resource management program are in place. The activities in which the HRPD is involved include the following:

- Recruitment
- Orientation
- Performance Appraisal
- Human Resources Inventory
- Career Planning
- Training and Development
- Retirement Counselling
- Classification and Compensation
- Staff Relations
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Communications
- Counselling
- Manpower Planning
- IPPEBS
- Benefits Administration

Many of these activities have not been developed to their full potential. From its review the Task Force concluded that:

1. The HRPD has assumed a "control" rather than a "service" role and because of this managers sometimes feel restricted in their efforts to manage human resources.

2. There is confusion between the managers and the HRPD with respect to their duties and responsibilities.
3. Some managers tend to neglect their responsibility for human resource management because of the heavy demands on their time due to technical duties and because of a lack of sufficient training in human resource management.

In order to rectify this situation, a clear and precise statement of the role of the HRPD is needed. Likewise, a re-affirmation of the role of the manager in human resource management is also required. A very strong recommendation to this effect was contained in the Moher Report. This theme was reiterated in the various presentations to this Task Force.

The Task Force considered various mechanisms whereby human resources management could be improved. An approach involving a high degree of staff participation was considered most suitable for this Ministry.

This signals a major shift in emphasis in human resources management and provides the responsiveness and integration that is required.

The participative management system recommended by the Task Force requires the setting up of committees and involvement of staff from all levels in the decision-making process. This method has been used successfully by Esso Petroleum and the Ministry of Transportation and Communications. The Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs of the Federal Government has also employed a committee structure successfully. The committee structure appears to be the most satisfactory means of ensuring the necessary co-operation, communication, and responsiveness among the parties involved.

The following roles are proposed:

(A) Human Resources & Personnel Development Branch Role

The role of the HRPD would be primarily one of service and support. Insofar as administrative matters are concerned, the role of the Branch would remain largely unchanged.

There would be significant changes in the role of the Branch regarding its involvement with many of the other activities listed previously. The Branch would then work in partnership with managers.

(B) Management Role

The manager would be responsible for carrying out performance management, orientation, a large measure of the recruitment and classification processes, career planning, manpower planning, training, some counselling and day-to-day staff relations. Thus the responsibility for human resource management would rest with the manager.

Recommendations

1. Senior management should be actively involved in ensuring the development of an effective human resources management program.
2. Committees should be established, involving staff at various levels, to provide integration of the human resource management program.
3. The responsibilities of both the HRPD and managers should be clearly defined.
4. The name of the HRPD Branch should be changed to Human Resources Branch for the following reasons:
 - i) It reflects current application, e.g. Human Resources Secretariat, six other Government Ministries.
 - ii) The term is all-encompassing and does not need additional description.
 - iii) The personnel development function is primarily the responsibility of the line manager.

RECRUITMENT/STAFFING

Introduction

Recruitment is the process of attracting applicants to fill available positions. Staffing includes recruitment, selection, placement and redeployment of staff.

Staffing is considered by such companies as IBM and Esso Petroleum to be one of the most crucial elements in the human resources management process. In these organizations, recent graduates, amongst the top in their classes, are carefully screened and exhaustively trained to become future company managers.

The Ontario Public Service tends to be "vacancy driven", waiting for vacancies to occur then attempting to attract candidates who can do the complete job. Once hired, the new employee is often left to his or her own devices.

Discussion

A number of shortcomings in the staffing process were identified by the Task Force:

- The excessive time required to fill a vacancy;
- Too little time is taken to plan for known or anticipated vacancies;
- The roles and responsibilities of the Human Resources and Personnel Development Branch (HRPD) and the manager were often unclear;
- Not enough time is taken to select the best candidate;
- Human resources inventories are seldom accessed and often are found to be inadequate;
- Trainee, developmental and internship positions are seldom used;
- There is a perception that if vacancies are not filled immediately, they will be frozen or used elsewhere in the Ministry which often leads managers to fill the same position rather than considering alternatives;
- The competition process is not always seen to be fair and open.

Training and Orientation

It is important that new employees are provided with job specific training and an appropriate level of orientation.

A. Training

The various components of each job are identified as part of the staffing process. The successful candidate may be deficient in some areas. These deficiencies must be identified by the manager and a training program developed. This will include on-the-job instruction, programmed instruction and specific courses.

B. Orientation

As identified in the paper Focus on Communications, orientation is an important adjunct to the staffing process. It is not only a good practice - it is Government policy. The level of orientation will depend on whether the individual is:

1. new to the Government
2. new to the Ministry
3. new to the Division, Branch or Section

Credentialism

Credentialism is an employment practice which unnecessarily emphasizes the requirement to have a formal qualification.

A number of positions in the Ministry require professional status or APEO Certification. In some cases, the feeder groups do not have this requirement and as a result cannot qualify in spite of the knowledge, skills, ability and experience gained over a period of years. There is a strong feeling that the credentials required in many of these positions may be unnecessary.

Recommendations

1. In order to reduce staffing time, adopt a job specification maintenance program triggered by the performance management system and monitored by the HRPD.
2. Establish a system to plan vacancy filling options.
3. Define the roles and responsibilities of HRPD and managers in the staffing process.
4. Review the selection process to improve its effectiveness.
5. Review the various human resources inventories and improve their effectiveness.
6. Identify entry level positions and develop a strategy to introduce new talent from outside the Ministry.

7. Transfer the responsibility of the Vacancy Panel for determining what vacancies are to be filled to each Division Head or Branch Director.
8. Develop and publish Ministry guidelines for filling vacant positions.
9. To further reduce staffing delays, plan competition timing. Establish dates for interviews in conjunction with closing date to ensure manager and personnel representative are both available for interviews.
10. Review the staffing process with a view to expanding the number of positions which can be handled without the requirement of a personnel representative.
11. Reactivate a formal orientation program for staff new to the Government and the Ministry including presentations from various senior Ministry staff, audio-visuals and printed material.
12. Develop guidelines for managers to orient new staff to the Section, Branch and Division including the facilities, people and mandate.
13. Review all position specifications to ensure that only mandatory credentials are retained.

FOCUS ON COMMUNICATION

Introduction

Communication is an important factor in all organizations. In the Ministry, the successful implementation of a human resources management program will require effective communication between all managers and their staff, between the Human Resources Branch and the Divisions, and between senior management and the rest of the Ministry.

Discussion

Two areas requiring improvements in communication are discussed below.

1. Communication Between Managers and Staff

Managers should be encouraged to communicate with their staff by holding regular meetings, to be open in communication style, and to take time out of busy schedules to sit and talk with staff. In effect, managers should manage people and not only projects.

The communication of technical detail should be a responsibility of those staff directly involved with any project, not of the manager. Accommodating this requirement means more attendance by lower echelon staff at major meetings and more staff attending any one meeting. Whilst it may appear that there will be a greater expenditure of manpower, this is more than offset by considerable positive benefits which occur. Such an approach is a developmental tool which will produce improved presentation and interpersonal skills and increase job satisfaction. This teamwork, will foster staff morale and will provide first hand transfer of information.

Another aspect of communication with staff involves the orientation of new employees. Orientation is reviewed in the position paper Recruitment/Staffing; however, it is so important that it is noted here as a very necessary communication need. Not only should staff be informed about their own job, but they should also know about their section and its function, about the Ministry and about the government in general.

There is poor information transfer to staff regarding any new initiatives in government or the Ministry. It is necessary to keep all staff informed of important activities and issues, e.g. Ministry and Branch goals, operational plans, manpower directions, and human resources management issues.

Participative management is one form of communication between staff and management. This approach creates additional opportunities for discussion, more brainpower

for problem solving, and not only improves interpersonal skills but also creates trust and friendships among staff.

Staff/management committees provide another useful vehicle for maintaining good communication links. Local Employee Relations Committees (ERC's) provide a forum for discussing union/management differences before they become a major disruptive force. ERC's can also be used to develop and introduce positive programs involving staff motivation and morale. The formation of local ERC's should be encouraged and such committees should meet regularly.

2. Communication Between the Human Resources Branch and the Divisions

Currently there is little written material available to managers explaining the rules for recruitment, counseling and career planning being applied by the Human Resources Branch. Furthermore, managers do not usually know whether direction given by the Human Resources Branch is legislative in nature, Central Agency policy, a Human Resources Branch policy/procedure, or the personal opinion of a personnel representative. It is most important that any policies, procedures or guidelines be communicated in a clear and concise manner. The Human Resources Branch should review the quantity and quality of the available written material covering these topics, and redress any perceived deficiencies.

One mechanism to facilitate better communication would be the use of positions in the Human Resources Branch as developmental positions. This would provide the Branch with an understanding of line problems and difficulties and even the Ministry's work itself. Ultimately, by rotating staff through the Human Resources Branch, managers trained and knowledgeable in personnel matters will be created throughout the organization. This action is compatible with proposals in the Career Planning position paper. The Task Force strongly believes that any staffing initiative which provides line management experience to personnel staff will have spin-off benefits for the entire Ministry.

In addition, consideration should be given to rotating personnel staff to other areas of the Ministry. This will broaden the experience of the personnel staff, and also provide the opportunity of opening up other career horizons for them.

Recommendations

1. Orientation programs presently being used in the Ministry should be updated, broadened, formalized, and tailored to individual Region/Branch needs.

2. Information sessions to inform staff of new Ministry and Government initiatives should be held periodically and must be timely.
3. Directives detailing human resources management policies, guidelines, and procedures, should be developed and issued.
4. Bi-annual opinion surveys should be carried out, the results conveyed to staff and actions taken where necessary.
5. Consideration should be given to transferring some of the present Human Resources Branch duties to line functions. In particular the benefits of having the Administrative Managers assume some of these responsibilities should be explored.
6. Development positions in the HRB should be established to provide training opportunities for line managers. This arrangement should be reciprocated for HRB staff in other Branches and Regions.
7. Staff directly responsible for projects should attend more higher level meetings.
8. A participative management style should be encouraged.
9. The formation of local ERCs should be encouraged and such committees should meet regularly.

CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION ISSUES

Introduction

The Task Force was directed to review the current classification and compensation system within the Ministry, to report on perceived problems, and to recommend solutions.

Based on information gathered by the Task Force and representations made to it by staff, classification and compensation are undoubtedly two of the more important human resource issues today. They are both a serious source of discontent, which if not properly addressed and acted upon, will undermine other positive initiatives being proposed.

It is clear that the Ministry and government must spend more time and money on these issues. Compensation for many jobs in the Ontario Civil Service has fallen behind many comparative sectors.

It is absolutely critical that the Ontario Government maintain its competitiveness with other governments and the private sector if it hopes to attract and keep competent staff.

It is the belief of the Task Force that the non-competitiveness of the Ontario Governments' pay policy has led to great pressure on the classification system. There are examples of inability to attract suitably qualified candidates, or to keep existing staff, at current pay rates (e.g. mass spectrometrists, hydrogeologists, computer specialists, organic analytical scientists). This leads to pressure to raise classification levels to achieve pay level competitiveness.

There are a number of classification problems in the Ministry both individual and on a series basis. No attempt has or could be made to deal with individual or specific series issues. Rather, a system for dealing with these issues in the future will be recommended.

In general, the classification of individual positions has been delegated to Ministries of the Provincial Government. In the case of the Ministry of the Environment, this delegation has been to the Human Resources and Personnel Development Branch (HRPD). The Branch has complete authority in this area with the exception of certain key Management Compensation Plan jobs and the Executive Compensation Plan. The important point is that classification within the Ministry is currently the sole prerogative of the HRPD for all practical purposes.

Discussion

The Task Force was able to delineate specific issues which appeared to be the cause of significant concern. These are listed and described below:

(1) Compensation

The policy of the Ontario Government has been to maintain a competitive pay policy.

This policy is obviously not being adhered to. The Moher Report discusses at length the erosion of salaries at the most senior levels in the Civil Service. The Association of Professional Engineers (APEO) 1985 Membership Salary Survey places the median salary for Ontario Government professional engineers at the lowest for all government sectors, and seventh from the bottom of twenty-three private sector categories. At the highest quartile level, Ontario remains the lowest of government sectors, and ranks below twenty-two of the twenty-three private sector categories. The survey also notes that 33% of non-government engineers receive additional income not included in the salary survey (eg. bonuses, profit sharing).

It is apparent from the above example that a significant number of MOE employees are not paid at levels comparable to other governments or the private sector.

(2) Ministry Classifications

The Task Force is aware of several apparent inconsistencies of classification across the Branches and Regions of the Ministry. Three such examples are:

- (a) The classification level of investigators in the Investigation and Enforcement Branch, Tech. 5, Chem. Lab. (Atypical) raises much concern among staff in the Environmental Technician series. The rationale for this difference is not understood.

This situation is a classic example of the pressure put on the classification system where Ontario Government pay levels are not competitive and do not attract fully qualified candidates. These quick-fix solutions to fundamental problems invariably leave residual morale problems with other groups left in their wake.

The Task Force recognizes that there is a standing committee in the Ministry which deals with the Environmental Technician series classifications. There is a perception that this committee is not effective. However, the resolution of this issue is beyond their control. A report was tabled with the Task Force supporting the position that inequities do exist.

- (b) There is a different classification level assigned to the section manager level of the Ministry. For example, abatement managers in the Ministry's regional offices are generally classified at the PEN-20 level, whereas, policy section managers in head office are generally classified at the PEN-21 level.
- (c) The administrative managers in the Ministry range from level AGA 12 to AGA 21. In addition, there is a comparable position in the Information Series at the AIF 18 level.

There are concerns about the rationale for such disparities in levels. The Task Force is unable to understand the basis for the difference in levels.

(3) Inter-Ministry Classification Concerns

Concerns have also been expressed with respect to the differences in classification of apparently similar functions between this Ministry and other Ministries. Examples include:

- (a) There is a long-standing concern with respect to the compensation level of the Chemical Laboratory Technician Series in the Ministry of the Environment (165 employees) and Medical Laboratory Technicians in the Ministry of Health. According to information brought before the Task Force, the work function of the two groups are very similar. (An in-depth study by HRPD & Lab Services substantiates this inequity).
- (b) Safety Officers in the Ministry of the Environment are consistently 1 or 2 levels below Safety Officers in other Ministries.

(4) Conflict Resolution

Related closely to issues (2) and (3) is the apparent lack of any formal internal procedure or mechanism in the Ministry to deal with disagreements between management and HRPD on individual classifications or concern about series classifications.

It is also apparent that the high number of grievances is related to the simple fact that the grievance route is the only mechanism currently available for dealing with perceived inequities.

Further, the Task Force has noted that the Ontario Manual of Administration requires that each Deputy Minister institute a procedure by which he can make the final resolution of classification disputes. The Task Force is not aware that such a procedure has been used in the Ministry of the Environment.

(5) Office Administration Group

The recent introduction of a program to consolidate and redefine the Office Administration Group (OAG) is seen to be a forerunner of other such initiatives for major job function areas in the Ontario Government. Because of that, the Task Force reviewed the manner in which the OAG classification package is being implemented in the Ministry of the Environment. The implementation seems to represent a significant step forward in effecting major changes in the human resources area. Communication of the purposes of the change and how it is to be implemented has been well done. The use of panels for classification represents a rational approach.

The Task Force notes that the rewriting of job specifications is being carried out in consultation with both the affected employee and his/her branch administration. However, the actual classification or rating of each job is being carried out unilaterally by the HRPD. This is understandable under the current modus operandi of that Branch; however, the Task Force feels that management's role in classification should be reviewed.

(6) Compensable Factors

In discussions of classification, a significant degree of confusion and misunderstanding was attributed to the question of the relative weights to be assigned to compensable factors. The Task Force has been made aware of situations where there was difficulty in establishing or understanding the rationale which was applied.

For example, in the general comparison of head office versus operational jobs, the relatively higher weight assigned to "policy development" versus "program delivery" has caused considerable concern. The Task Force has been unable to determine a clear-cut rationale.

There is a feeling amongst the Task Force and amongst some staff who have spoken to its members that Ministry of the Environment staff are not adequately compensated for factors unique to or more significant to this Ministry. For example, this Ministry has a high public profile, experiences high media coverage and is subject to extreme public pressure in certain instances.

The issue is whether compensable factors related to specific jobs or series recognize these factors in comparison with other ministries who may experience them to a lesser degree. (This matter is dealt with in the paper "High Stress/Pressure Ministry".) Another major concern is the classification of highly technical positions which do not contain a significant supervisory component. There is a perception that the only way to raise the classification level of a technical position is to rearrange the organization so that the position has at

least three persons reporting to it. (The paper on "Parallel Streaming" addresses this in more detail.)

(7) Role of Managers

At present, managers have little authority in the classification function. Pending a complete review of classification authority, classification should remain the domain of HRPD.

The Moher report recommends the decentralization of the human resources function to the managerial level. Considerable training and orientation would be required before authority could be further delegated.

(8) Need for Resource Material

There is a significant lack of resource material to assist managers in the preparation of job specifications. A perception exists that the classification of positions is to a large degree dependant on wordsmanship. Often, management is told that there are no "key words". However, words such as "co-ordinate", "liaise", "assist", "supervise", "carry out", are very significant in the classification of a position. If managers are to assume a greater role in this function, it is clear that resource material and training must be provided.

(9) Role of the Human Resources and Personnel Development Branch

There is a pervasive attitude among many staff that the HRPD, in classification matters, is often a hurdle to be overcome, rather than a partner in this exercise. While it is recognized that a control function is necessary, a mechanism for reconciling differences should be developed to open up the process.

The Task Force has not and can not attempt to deal with these issues specifically, but rather has addressed itself to setting up a system by which these concerns can be addressed and hopefully alleviated.

Recommendations

1. The Staff Relations Committee should deal with the following classification issues:
 - a) examine intra and inter Ministry classification discrepancies
 - b) resolve differences between line management and HRPD regarding classifications
 - c) monitor classification grievances to determine whether trends are developing and take appropriate action

2. HRPD build on the methodology and expertise used in the implementation of the OAG series.
3. HRPD should use whatever means are at its disposal to ensure that all of its activities, including day to day activities, are properly communicated to staff.
4. Classification should remain the domain of HRPD for the present and a review undertaken to determine where the classification function should ultimately reside.
5. A formal analysis of compensable factors and their relative weight in the Ministry of the Environment should be carried out.
6. The Deputy Minister and the Director of HRPD take up the matter of the non-competitive pay levels in the Ontario Civil Service with the Human Resources Secretariat.
7. Ministry management immediately establish a "fast track" mechanism to resolve outstanding, long-term major classification issues impacting on major groups of Ministry employees, (Chemical Lab Technicians, Environmental Technician, Administrative Managers and Safety Officers.)

PARALLEL STREAMING

Introduction

Parallel streaming is the provision of an alternate route of advancement for technical or scientific staff similar to that available in management.

There has been a perception developed over the years that, in order to progress in the organization beyond a certain level, it was necessary to move into management and take on the responsibilities involved in handling human resources. Although it must be recognized that continued advancement must ultimately require such a move, some non-management pathway for advancement must be created to encourage the technical specialist.

The Ministry of the Environment is a highly technical Ministry. To remain pre-eminent the Ministry must be able to retain high quality staff in technical fields, in competition with both the private sector and the Federal Government. The retention of high quality staff was one of the needs identified in the Moher Report.

Discussion

The perceived lack of access to an alternate advancement route other than through management can lead to a situation where:

- i) An excellent scientist/engineer becomes a manager, without managerial ability, inclination and/or training, or
- ii) The manager fails to abandon the scientist/ engineering function, either because of reluctance or because of the technical demands still required.

In either case, the result is a poor manager.

It is imperative that technical and scientific expertise be encouraged and retained by the Ministry. The need for retention of such expertise is recognized in many of the more successful private sector companies, and addressed by the provision of a parallel streaming mechanism. Too often, the Ministry has provided valuable training and experience to talented staff, only to lose them to other organizations.

There is little opportunity for high calibre staff, who prefer to remain in the technical field, to move upward with the corresponding increase in remuneration.

It is recognized that the majority of employees will ultimately reach a career plateau; this will occur even in the case of exceptional performers. However, the level at which the impediment to advancement is perceived to occur

without a move into a managerial position is not sufficiently substantial to retain high quality, technically oriented staff.

This can result in:

- i) individuals leaving the Ministry for the private sector or other agencies where advancement opportunities exist in a technical stream.

This loss to the private sector would be far greater if the economy were in a period of rapid growth. There have been losses in certain areas where the private sector is in the process of expansion i.e. analytical chemistry, hydrogeology. While the numbers lost may not represent a high percentage of total Ministry staff, the positions vacated are crucial to the effective functioning of Ministry programs.

- ii) individuals not being attracted to technical positions in the Ministry due to the lower classification level (and hence remuneration) generally assigned to these positions.

However, despite the perception which exists, for staff within the MCP there is no inherent barrier to advancement on a non-managerial stream. In the classification standards, there exists no actual requirement for any position up to the level equivalent to PM20, to supervise a minimum number of subordinate staff. Examination of a selection of "benchmark" positions at "management" levels has revealed a PEN-18 and PEN-19 supervising no subordinates, a PEN-20 supervising one subordinate, and a PRP-20 supervising only 2 subordinates. A similar situation exists in the AM classification series.

With respect to technical staff in the Bargaining Unit, a review should be undertaken to determine impediments to advancement on a technical expert basis. Mechanisms to overcome such barriers should be identified wherever possible.

Recommendations

1. The Ministry should identify technical specialist positions at the PM 18, 19, 20 or equivalent level.
2. Steps should be taken to establish these positions in appropriate Branches.
3. With respect to technical staff in the Bargaining Unit, a review should be undertaken to determine impediments to advancement on a technical expert basis. Mechanisms to overcome such barriers should be identified wherever possible.

HIGH STRESS/HIGH PRESSURE MINISTRY

Introduction

Stress is defined as the way in which individuals react - physically and emotionally - to change. Short term stress results in a response which assists in meeting challenging or threatening situations, is automatic and essential and often results in the attainment of peak efficiency. Long term stress, when challenge, change and pressure are excessive or continuous, can result in detrimental effects on physical and emotional health.

Over recent years, the Ministry of the Environment has taken on a very high profile and has been required to deal with issues of increasing complexity. There are frequently great expectations of action and issue resolution, both on the part of senior management and the general public. The Ministry is often berated in the media for secrecy and slowness of response. However, for a number of years the Ministry has been involved in areas of public concern not presently addressed through existing government legislation or programs. Some examples of this include indoor air quality and health effects of trace contaminants. Some of the issues have no ready resolution or clear-cut answers, and in many cases, staff are working in areas without precedent with expert technical advice in the new areas not being generally available. The Ministry's initiative in public participation will increase contact with the public and media at public meetings.

The Human Resources Task Force has received input from both the Directors' Committee report and individual submissions identifying a concern with the increasing pressures being placed on staff, such as those identified above.

It is recognized that stress affects all walks of life and all positions within the Ministry. The Task Force addressed the stress issue as it pertains to the Ministry rather than looking at stress in the work place.

Discussion

Before attempting to deal with this issue it must be realized that to a certain extent stress "comes with the territory". It must also be recognized that the stress load may vary from time to time and indeed may not even manifest itself to the same degree in all positions with identical responsibilities. It can also vary with geographic location, or the nature of the client sectors dealt with. In this context, the only concern should then be to ensure that such factors are adequately reflected in position specifications.

Further, it is possible that the issue of job stress may be exacerbated because of dissatisfaction with other aspects of this Ministry's operations, some of which could include compensation for emergency response, lack of recognition of the importance and dignity of the individual, and lack of effective human resource management.

Stress within the Ministry may be imposed from either internal or external sources. External sources would include:

- i) Working in areas without precedent;
- ii) Dealing directly with an irate, distrustful and frequently abusive public;
- iii) Emergency response situations;
- iv) Acting as Ministry spokesperson with the media;

Internal sources would include:

- i) A lack of appreciation on the need for communication from senior management to staff, e.g. decisions taken at Management Committee, policy changes, corporate strategy, new government directions or policies;
- ii) A lack of recognition of the time requirement to provide information, especially when analytical results and interpretations are required, e.g. reports, budget and MBR information;
- iii) Frequent changing of schedules by senior management for presentations, staff meetings, information sessions;
- iv) Inclusion of new programs and activities to already overburdened workloads, without corresponding deletion of existing programs or provision of additional staff;
- v) Lack of mechanisms to deal with human resources problems, e.g. poor performers, low morale.

Recommendations

1. All levels of management within the Ministry must recognize stressors or stress factors and take these into account to ensure establishment of realistic and attainable goals and objectives.
2. Management and staff should be aware of the need for stress management and address this need where required.
3. Management should encourage or facilitate the development of in-house (governmental) recreation facilities.

4. Senior management support of staff should be more visible, particularly in critical times.
5. Position specifications should be reviewed and, where appropriate, high stress responsibilities identified and reflected in the compensable factors.

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